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THE BRITISH PROTESTANT MISSIONS
ON THE KENYA COAST AND HIGHLANDS
1873-1929

by



ARNOLD J. TEMU

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
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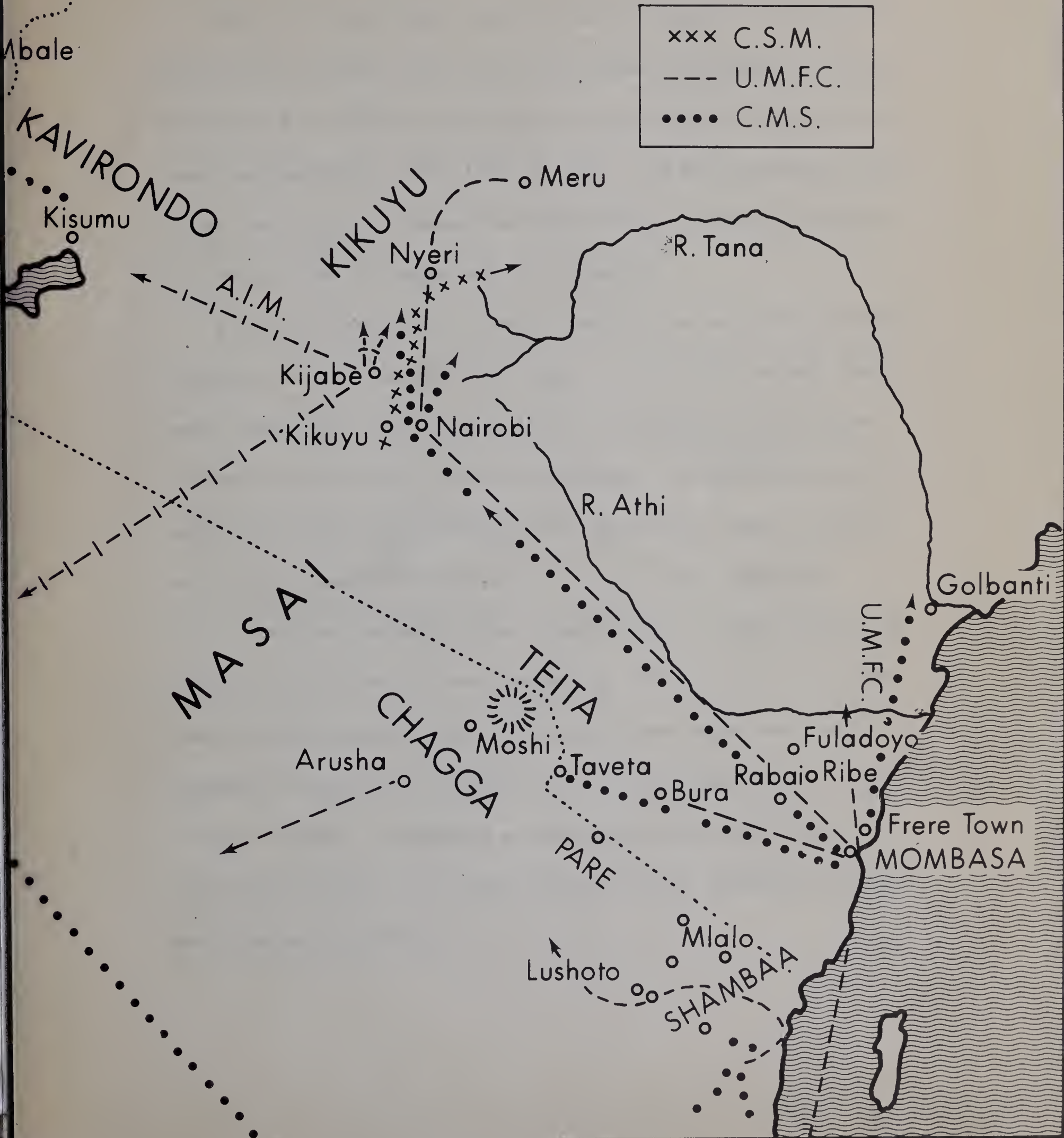
UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled The British Protestant Missions on the Kenya Coast and Highlands, 1873-1929, submitted by Arnold J. Temu in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



L. Rudolf

Main Mission Stations



ABSTRACT

This is a study of the activities and the work of the British Protestant missions--the Church Missionary Society, the United Methodist Free Church and the Church of Scotland--on the Kenya coast and highlands, from 1873 to 1929. For the purposes of this study, the highlands include the Mount Kenya-Kilimanjaro area, the home of the Wakikuyu and the Wachagga.

From 1873 until the end of the century the British Protestant missions worked mainly on the coast. During that period, their work, especially that of the C.M.S. was confined to the slaves who were freed, while on the Indian Ocean, by the British naval patrol ships after the abolition of the Arab slave trade in 1873; the C.M.S. founded Freretown as a freed slave settlement. Apart from the problems of the rehabilitation of freed slaves, the survival of the missions was uncertain. They were set upon the predominantly Muslim coast, where the population was just as opposed to them as the missions were to the established culture, law and customs. Inevitably a major part of the missionaries' work and activities, for almost the rest of the nineteenth century, was directed at survival.

Apart from the Muslim coast, there was the predominantly African territory beyond. The Africans had no wish to become Christians, but the missionaries were allowed to live among them both for economic reasons and for the prestige and military strength that an alliance with the newcomers would bring to the tribe. The missionaries were entirely dependent upon the Africans for their safety, food and shelter, and they were, therefore, subservient to them to an unusual extent.

With the establishment of British rule in Kenya, during the second half of the 1890's, the position of the missions also changed. The missionaries became part of the establishment, and their future in Kenya was henceforth assured. The new administration gave them the protection they needed to expand into the heavily-populated highlands (and to deal a final blow to slavery without the fear of the coastal Arabs), while the Kenya-Uganda railway, begun in 1896 and completed in 1901, facilitated their occupation of the highlands, which became a centre of their work, while the Muslim coast became a backwater.

The main feature of the missions was the mission-house, in which the missionaries gathered their converts in order to teach them the rudiments of western civilization and Christianity. Ed-

ucation, rather than Christianity, attracted Africans to the mission-houses. By the mid-twenties the demand for education had become universal, and the means and conditions of the missions proved inadequate to meet the demand.

The policy of the missions found its chief critics in the African Christians themselves. Essentially, the missions taught and demanded submission and total obedience, neither of which could be reconciled with the rising nationalism of the Africans, led by the graduates of the missions. Politically, the missions became an adjunct of the administration, and more in sympathy with the European settlers than with the Africans whose interests they were supposed to serve. On the social scene, the missionaries were, if anything, essentially Victorian, and they were opposed to African customs and traditions, which the Africans were not prepared to forego. From 1927, different strands of disagreement between the missions and the Africans began to coalesce into a formidable opposition which found expression in the Kikuyu Central Association formed in 1925. In 1929 a break was made with the missions when the Africans set up independent schools and churches all over the highlands.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Map..... Frontispiece

(Main Mission Stations of the British Protestant
Missions on the Kenya Coast and Highlands)

CHAPTER	<u>Page</u>
INTRODUCTION--EARLY MISSIONARY EFFORT IN KENYA PRIOR TO 1874.....	1
I THE BRITISH PROTESTANT MISSIONS AT MOMBASA COAST AND THE INTERIOR, 1874-1890.....	31
The Freed Slave Settlement and Politics with the Arabs, 1874-1890.....	31
Missionary Work and Expansion 1874-1892.....	76
II CHANGED SITUATIONS, PROBLEMS AND THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY, 1890-1907.....	97
III THE FIRST GENERATION OF AFRICANS IN THE MISSION STATIONS, 1874-1904.....	144
IV MISSIONARY EXPANSION, ACQUISITION OF LAND AND THE DISRUPTION OF AFRICAN SOCIETY, 1900-1914.....	196
V THE BRITISH PROTESTANT MISSIONS AND THE EDUCATION OF THE AFRICANS, 1874- 1929.....	243
VI THE TURBULENT TWENTIES.....	312
Missionaries and the Labour Problem and African Political Associations, 1921-1929	

CHAPTER

Page

VII	THE PARTING OF THE WAYS: REBELLION FROM CHURCH AND FROM THE SCHOOLS, 1925-1929.....	378
	EPILOGUE.....	429
	BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	434

INTRODUCTION

EARLY MISSIONARY EFFORT IN KENYA PRIOR TO 1874

Modern Christian work in what is today Kenya began in 1844. Johann Ludwig Krapf, a German trained at Basel Protestant Institution, working under the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.), established himself at Mombasa, on the east coast of Africa,¹ although this was an unexpected missionary establishment, and was not intended to be a permanent one in the first place. Krapf was originally at Shoa, in Ethiopia, where he had joined the Abyssinian Mission. The Galla, here, proved to be too hostile to the Christian missionaries and the C.M.S. work, therefore ended with the C.M.S. missionaries abandoning their station in 1843. Krapf went southwards to Mombasa from where he hoped to approach the Galla. The Europeans on the coast were naturally friendly, as was also the Sultan of Zanzibar, who permitted Krapf to start a mission at Mombasa. With so encouraging a reception, he undoubtedly was optimistic of good results, and so he decided to establish his first mission here from where

¹Krapf to Lay Secretary, January 10, 1844. CA5/MI.6, C.M.S. Archives, London; and, J. L. Krapf, Travels, Researches and Missionary Labours During an Eighteen Years' Residence in East Africa (London, 1960), p.129.

he hoped to reach the Galla. Two years later, Krapf was joined by a fellow German Johannes Rebmann, sent out also by the C.M.S. They transferred from Mombasa, a predominantly Muslim town and by no means friendly, and established the first C.M.S. at Rabai Mpia, among the Nyika, fifteen miles from this Arab-Swahili town.²

This was not, however, the first time that missionaries from Western Europe had established themselves at Mombasa, on the East African coast. Roman Catholic missionaries from Portugal were at work here for a short period during the occupation of the East Coast by the Portugese, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In 1597, Augustinian friars established a monastery at Mombasa, and began work further north at Faza and Lamu, about the same time.³

Roman Catholic occupation of the coast was part of the commercial expansion of Portugal into the Indian Ocean, in the two centuries following the discovery by Vasco da Gama of a sea route to India in 1497. There was, of course, a missionary

²Ibid.

³C. R. Boxer and Carlos de Azevedo, Fort Jesus and the Portugese in Mombasa 1593 - 1729 (London, 1960), pp. 29-30; and Roland Oliver and Gervase Mathew, (eds.), History of East Africa (Oxford, 1963), pp. 136-137.

side to this commercial expansion, first to minister to the Portuguese who went overseas and second to proselytise among the inhabitants who were brought under the Portuguese commercial empire. In this expansion, Mombasa was a backwater, serving only as a stepping and restocking port to Goa and the Portuguese East Indian Empire. Likewise, Portuguese missionary occupation of Mombasa and the rest of the northern coast also became peripheral. It was no wonder, then, that the Portuguese conquistadores, traders and missionaries confined themselves to the forts, and did not penetrate into the immediate interior.

Significantly, Mombasa came to hold the same position in the modern period during the political and missionary occupation of Kenya after 1900. Once missionaries began work in the highlands, emphasis shifted and the predominantly Muslim coast became, therefore, a backwater of their work in Kenya.

On the east coast, the Portuguese found Arab-African settlements. The most important of these city states were Pate, Malindi, Mombasa, and Kilwa, whose inhabitants, the Swahili-Arabs, were predominantly Muslim. Malindi was friendly to the new Europeans because it saw, in them, a possible alliance against Mombasa, the inveterate enemy of Malindi; however, the rest of the settlements were very hostile to the intruders, and succumbed to the Portuguese

conquistadores only after the Portuguese had suppressed them, ruthlessly, and had burnt down their towns. The Swahili-Arabs saw the Portuguese as intruders into the Indian Ocean where they had a trading monopoly.

The Portuguese refrained from spreading Christianity openly among so hostile a population. More importantly, the inhabitants had been practising Muslims for many years, and already, as in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Christianity was at a great disadvantage in the face of Islam. Islam had been here for many years, and accorded well with some of the customs and traditions of the coastal population.

In the Kongo, however, which was untouched by Islam, the Portuguese missionaries met with great success. The King of the Kongo asked for baptism and for missionaries. He was soon baptised as John, as was also his wife; his eldest son was baptised Alphonse. One of his other sons, and the wives he had to cast away, led a rebellion and a non-Christian campaign. Nonetheless, Portuguese proselytisation continued in the Kongo, and, in the sixteenth century, thousands of mass baptisms were effected with the arrival of the Jesuits.⁴ According to Groves, 5,000

⁴C. P. Groves, The Planting of Christianity in Africa, 4 vols. (London, 1948-1958), Vol. I, pp. 130-131.

Kongolese were baptised within three months of their arrival; in 1581, another Jesuit who had come at the request of the King baptised another 1,500, and in 1585 another one baptised another 1,000 Kongolese.⁵

Yet, in the middle of the nineteenth century there were no true Kongolese Christians, as a proof of what had appeared to be such a successful Portuguese Christian effort on the one hand, and a positive response toward westernization by the Kongolese, especially their king, on the other. In that area, Christianity vanished, as did the Portuguese empire. Unlike the situation at Mombasa and the East coast, there was here no Islam which could be put forward as an explanation. This failure of the Roman Catholic influence to last in a predominantly African society, untouched by a foreign religion, lies more in the all-embracing power of African institutions, of which religion is certainly the most important, to resist westernization, rather than merely in the failure of Portuguese missionaries to plant the roots of Roman Catholicism firmly on Kongolese soil.⁶

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ruth Slade, English Speaking Missions in the Congo Independent State, 1878-1908 (Brussels, n. d.), p. 19.

In part, too, political considerations determined conversions, and the early missionaries failed to adjust their religion to the Kongolese society; this the missionaries of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries also failed to do. Hence Portuguese Christianity did not achieve a fundamental change in the way of life of the Kongolese people.⁷

At Mombasa, the efforts of the Augustinians were short-lived. Conversions were reported, although not on a mass scale. Moreover, the converts were, for the most part, the slaves and the employees of the Portuguese in Fort Jesus. But this came to an abrupt end with the religious rebellion of Dom Jeronimo Chingulia in 1631. Yusuf bin Hassan had been sent over to Goa to be educated and to be Christianized in the Augustinian House. To recompense for the Portuguese murder of his father, Hassan, who was the Sultan of Mombasa in 1614, now under the Christian name of Dom Jeronimo Chingulia, was offered the Sultanate of Mombasa, Malindi and Pemba in 1626.⁸ But Dom Jeronimo had been brought up as a Muslim, and his people, being Muslims, despised him as a Christian. His Christianity was only nominal,

⁷Ibid.

⁸Boxer and Azevedo, op. cit., pp. 34-35.

however, for he was soon saying Muslim prayers at his father's grave, and planning the murder of those who had killed his father. In 1631, August 15, on the Feast of Assumption, he saw the opportunity to execute his plan by taking advantage of the celebrations. He and his followers entered the Fort, dressed in festival clothes, and killed the captain and the garrison before anyone realised what was happening.⁹ He offered the remaining Portuguese the choice of becoming Muslim, killing those who refused to do so.

Boxer tells us that

the only survivors of Mombasa's little European community were one gunner who apostatized and four Portuguese laymen and an Augustinian friar who managed to steal away in a canoe and reach the Bajun Islands.¹⁰

Dom Jeronimo, who had now taken his Muslim name, Yusuf bin Hassan, did not succeed in raising the whole of the East African coast against the Portuguese as he had planned to do. Personal rivalry between the city states still ranked high, and Zanzibar and the Bajun Islands remained loyal to the Portuguese. There was, however, little doubt that the revolt initiated a period of intermittent rebellion and chaos on the east coast. It led to the final overthrow of the Portuguese along the whole of the east coast in

⁹ Ibid., p. 36.

¹⁰ Ibid.

1689 by a combination of local forces and forces from Oman in Arabia.

The year 1631 therefore saw the end of Christianity from Western Europe at Mombasa. The few Christians who survived were overpowered by Islam which was, at any rate, more in accord with the customs and traditions of the coast than Christianity could ever be. Thus the Roman Catholic Christians disappeared from our literature on the coast and, as in the Kongo, Krapf did not find any trace of these Roman Catholic converts. Over two hundred years were to pass before Christianity appeared again on the Kenya coast. The new Christianity was to be pioneered by Protestant missionaries. During that intervening period Islam held sway over the coast, a sway it was still to hold during the modern era of missionary expansion into Kenya.

The Kenya coast, to which Krapf and Rebmann came in the 1840's, was predominantly Muslim, having been so for centuries. The increasing influence of the Omani Arabs that began with the expulsion of the Portuguese from the East African coast in 1689 did not become firmly established before the beginning of the nineteenth century. Sayyid Said came into power in Oman in 1804 and having consolidated his power over the Arab peninsula,

he began to establish authority over Zanzibar. By the third decade of the new century he felt secure enough at Oman to move his capital to Zanzibar at the centre of the richest part of his dominions.¹¹ By the 1840's he had established his authority over the coastal towns and had stationed his own governors in each of the cities. Islam took firm roots and there was increasing migration from Arabia to the more prosperous East African coast. With so firm a hold, Said was now ready to tap the commercial resources of the coast whose center was at Zanzibar. Trade was mainly in ivory, slaves and copal.

Internal commerce apart, Said also established connections with Europe and America. In 1844 the French established a consulate at Zanzibar, having been preceded by Germany, Britain and America towards the end of the third decade. This international connection was, however, essentially commercial, though such a contact inevitably increased the prestige of the Sultan and, of course, Zanzibar. Krapf, therefore, found flourishing trading firms from Hamburg, from Salem in North America, and from France established in Zanzibar. The Americans dealt mainly in Americani (calico), the Germans in hard-

¹¹ Oliver and Mathew, History of East Africa, pp. 159-161, 212-213.

ware goods, and the French in spirits.¹²

A significant side of this commercial exploitation of the east coast was, of course, the development of long distance trade routes to the interior to tap the resources from the mainland. At Zanzibar rich Indian financiers settled to finance these caravans, and the demand for more ivory and slaves certainly stimulated this trade. One other stimulant was the manufacture of firearms by industrial Europe which, once procurable in Zanzibar, made these long distance trade routes safer amidst often hostile Africans in the interior. Said was a shrewd trader and merchant, and it would be reasonable to believe that he took a personal interest in this trade. One important feature of the period then was that caravans into the mainland became more frequent, better equipped, and larger. Unlike the earlier ones, they were now armed. It was also the period during which traders from the coast, the Zanzibaris, began to penetrate into the interior to undercut the monopoly in the carrying trade held by the Africans themselves until the middle of the nineteenth century.¹³

Intertribal trade always went on and the women of one tribe would

¹² Roland Oliver, The Missionary Factor in East Africa (London, 1952), pp. 1-2.

¹³ Oliver and Mathew, History of East Africa, pp. 267, 314-315.

trade goods with the women of other tribes. In Kenya, Anthony Low has told us that

there was frequent trafficking between the women of the Masai and the women of the Chagga and Kikuyu, who, even when their menfolk were fighting were deemed to be immune from attack. . . .¹⁴

For long distance trading specialization was necessary and it required men, rather than women, to carry on this trade which involved months of journeying to and from the coast. The Akamba of Kenya monopolised this trade in Kenya as the Nyamwezi did in Central Tanganyika and the Yao did in Central Africa. Before the middle of the nineteenth century all the trade in ivory, slaves, copper and salt--the last two for internal trade--between the mainland and the coast was exclusively in their hands. While the Yao organised caravans to as far as Katanga, across Lake Nyasa and the Nyamwezi to Lakes Tanganyika and eastern Kongo as far as Katanga, the Akamba tapped the Kenya mainland sending trading parties across the Kikuyu country into the heart of the highlands. The main source of trade was, of course, ivory and slaves which were badly needed on the coast and in India. Krapf said

the Swahili purvey to the Wakamba cotton fabrics (Americano) blue calico, glass beads, copper and brass wire, ruddle, black pepper, salt, luaha, blue vitriol (zinc), etc., and receive in exchange chiefly cattle and ivory.¹⁵

¹⁴Ibid., p. 314.

¹⁵Krapf, Travels and Researches, p. 353.

This monopoly came to an end during the reign of Sayyid Said when the Zanzibaris began to organise caravans into the interior.

Besides the Akamba, who from their home in the Kamba hills had come to prominence as long distance traders, there were other tribes in the interior who were collectors of the ivory and from whom slaves came. More relevant to this study, these were the ones who were to be profoundly affected by the Christian expansion of the nineteenth century. The Masai held sway over the plains from east of Lake Victoria to the coast and southwards to Northern Tanganyika.¹⁶ The Masai were a warlike tribe warring mainly over cattle. All Masai young men were trained and zealous warriors, but they were not interested in territorial acquisition and their domain was essentially a cattle one. Nonetheless, before the middle of the century, they held unquestioned sway over this extensive territory and their fighting reputation was a significant feature that kept Zanzibari slaving parties from venturing into their country, even after the 1850's.

Over in the foothills of Mount Kenya were the Kikuyu, a Bantu people, cultivating grain in the fertile soil of the high-

¹⁶ J. Thomson, Through Masai Land (London, 1885), pp. 436-439, and map thereon.

lands. They were invulnerable to Masai attacks in the forest hills as were also the Akamba in Kamba Hills and the Chagga on the foothills of Kilimanjaro Mountain. There is no doubt that Masai warriors prevented these tribes from expanding into the open plains when, in their forest hills, they were safe and the soil was fertile for settled agriculture, their main occupation. The Akamba, it will be noticed, supplemented this by long-distance trading. On the coastal fringe where the Masai had driven them were the Nyika, and on the north and south of the coastal fringe were also the Digo and the Seguju, while on the Tana River were the Pokkomo and the Galla who held sway in the seventeenth century. These were the tribes among whom the British Protestant missionaries were to labour from the 1840's.

The Zanzibaris (commonly referred to as Swahili traders) began to penetrate into the interior of Kenya in the late forties, and their first trading caravan reached the Kikuyu in 1849.¹⁷ During the fifties these coastal caravans increased in size and frequency though they avoided the Masai route by going south to Kilimanjaro and north again to Kenya though east of Lake Victoria. Alternatively they took the Kamba route, making sure

¹⁷ Oliver and Mathew, History of East Africa, p. 316.

to keep out of the way of the Masai as best they could. These trading caravans became more common in the sixties, and by the seventies they had reached Kikuyu by approaching it from the west by way of the Central Tanganyika main highway, and from the east from Mombasa.¹⁸ At the same time they wrested the monopoly of this trade from the Kamba, a process that became complete by the seventies.

The entrance of the Zanzibaris, a predominantly coastal group of middlemen trading in ivory and slaves, into the heart of Kenya brought significant results of a lasting nature into the interior. Their penetration of the mainland, it will be remembered, was facilitated by firearms. It is therefore reasonable to expect that firearms made their way into the hands of the Africans about the same time. No traffic in firearms of any alarming significance seems to have occurred in the mainland of Kenya although it was alarmingly great in Central Africa. In the region of Lakes Tanganyika and Nyasa firearms became a means through which villages were destroyed and populations captured as slaves for sale at the coast or for the Africans who, like the Arabs, had adopted this economic system. The destruction which the Zanzibaris, with firearms, caused in Kenya

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 315-319.

was less than in the south; for one thing no distinct Arab-Swahili settlement grew here as did the one around Tabora, and there were no trading bases in the interior comparable in size with, say, Tabora and Ujiji. But there was an increase in the transportation of slaves from the interior following the penetration of the mainland by the ruthless Arab-Swahili traders who were armed with firearms. The Masai, the Kikuyu and the Nandi were very hostile to the caravans from the coast, and this would explain in part the diminished havoc and destruction the Swahili Arabs were able to cause. Nonetheless, they did manage to squeeze a trade in ivory and slaves; the size of the caravans that grew from 500 to 1,000 between the sixties and the eighties is a measure of this trade. As Low says

although they probably never provided more than perhaps 20 per cent of the total Zanzibari trade in East Africa, . . . one hears of Mombasa marketing 2,600 frasilas of ivory in the 1840's (in addition to slaves, camels, cattle, asses, rhino horns and hippo teeth).¹⁹

This then is a very rough picture of the Kenya in which Krapf and Rebmann lived. Meanwhile the two C. M. S. missionaries had engaged in the exploration of the country in which they had come to live in order, if anything, to prepare the way for those who were to follow them. In this they were remarkably

¹⁹Ibid., p. 320.

successful, Rebmann going as far as Kilimanjaro in 1848 where he reported that the Chagga, unlike the Nyika, had a centralized political system.²⁰ Like his C.M.S. missionary followers of the 1880's, he reported that once the chief had been won over for Christ he would pioneer the way for the commoners to follow suit.

Krapf went southwards to the Usambara Mountains, reaching the court of Kimweri where there were Muslims from the coast already established at Kimweri's court, but the Muslims did not succeed in dissuading Kimweri from expressing a desire to have teachers, artisans and doctors. The response that Kimweri showed to Christianity was a genuine one, or so it appeared to Krapf, and this was later proved by his response to the missionaries of the Universities Mission to Central Africa who established themselves here. Krapf twice visited the interior of Kenya, reaching as far as Ukambani in 1849 and 1851.²¹ The previous year he had travelled down the coast by Arab dhow from Mombasa to the mouth of the river Rovuma, the present boundary between

²⁰Krapf, op. cit., pp. 213-233 and Groves, op. cit., II, p. 101.

²¹Krapf, op. cit., pp. 310-311 and Groves, op. cit., II, pp. 104-105.

mainland Tanzania and Mozambique.²² He stopped at almost every coastal port, witnessing, of course, much of the commercial activity that went on. Erhardt, who had joined the two C.M.S. missionaries, accompanied him. At Kilwa Kivinje, the chief slaving coastal port on the East African coast, they found trafficking in slaves at its peak and estimated that the annual number of slaves handled here was equal to the population of Kilwa Kivinje, which they estimated to be over 12,000.²³ In 1853 Krapf went back to Europe because of ill health but returned again in 1861 to help Charles New establish a mission station of the United Methodist Free Church at Ribe, which was fully established the following year by Thomas Wakefield and Charles New.²⁴ Erhardt left for Europe in 1855 and Rebmann remained alone until 1875.

The explorations were a great contrast to the actual Christian work they achieved among the Wanyika around Rabai. The two missionaries, and especially Rebmann after Krapf had

²² Krapf, op. cit., pp. 411-412.

²³ Groves, op. cit., p. 105.

²⁴ Oliver, The Missionary Factor in East Africa, p. 8. Typed manuscript in the Methodist Archives, London. "Heywood and the First Overseas Mission of U. M. F. C." N/T 100.

left for Europe in 1853, did not succeed in working the wonders they had expected to do among the Nyika. Their alien religion did not offer the Nyika any added attraction to their own traditional religion, nor did it have anything in common with theirs, as Islam came to have. Instead the missionaries were demanding nothing short of a revolution which the Nyika neither understood nor bothered to try to understand. Rebmann's rigid, ascetic Christianity, with his emphasis on a holy life and indifference to all worldly enjoyments and employments, made little impression on the Nyika, who were likely to be attracted more by an undertaking that would be materially useful to them than by demands that they live a clean, sober, monogamous life, rejecting ancestral worship and sacrifice. It was no wonder then that in spite of the arrival of the two African catechists, William Jones and Ishmael Seimler, together with their wives, from the C.M.S. African Asylum at Sharanpur, Bombay,²⁵ there was no response from the Nyika to this new message.

These two men arrived in 1864 to spread the gospel among their fellow Africans. By 1873, when the new zeal in missionary work began in earnest with the founding of the freed slave settlement at Freretown, about ten miles from Mombasa, there

²⁵C. M. S. Proceedings, 1865, p. 179.

were no Nyika converts to show as a result of the labours of the C.M.S. missionary effort in the past three decades. Sir Bartle Frere visited Rabai in 1873 and blamed Rebmann for not injecting an industrial element of a practical nature into the mission. although he praised Rebmann for his linguistic studies, which included the completion of "three dictionaries of the Nyasa, the Nyika and the Swahili tongues." However, he said

. . . we found but eight converts at Kissoludini (Rabai) and five of them belonged to two families which had joined from the African Orphanage at Nassik, near Bombay. Mr. Rebmann has insuperable scruples regarding the admission of anything like an industrial or worldly element into the teaching or action of the mission.²⁶

In 1866 when Rebmann worked alone among the Nyika, David Livingstone had just completed what was to be a most memorable crossing of the African continent, from the Atlantic Ocean to the Indian Ocean, travelling from Luanda in Angola to Quilimane in Mozambique on the Indian Ocean. Livingstone, with his African followers, took twenty months to cross the continent from west to east. Before he embarked on this marathon journey as a missionary of the London Missionary Society, he had crossed the Kalahari Desert from his resident mission

²⁶Bartle Frere to Granville, April 1, 1873, F.O. 84/1391, Public Records Office. (Hereafter referred to as P.R.O.)

station, Kuruman, in 1849, the year when Krapf first visited the Kamba in the interior of Kenya. In 1851 he had reached the River Zambezi which he hoped would provide the means of transportation to reach the pagan heart of Africa that was waiting to be evangelised. Here Livingstone came across the Arab slave trade for the first time, an event that made his mission to open up the interior of Africa for Christianity more compelling and more necessary than before.²⁷ Henceforth it became his lifetime endeavour to Christianize the African interior and to replace the slave trade with new forms of commerce. This opening up of Africa to Western Christianity and commerce would, in due course, have its repercussions. The lasting effects on the lives of the Africans about whom Livingstone cared so much was little imagined. For the time being, however, only Christianity would root out the traffick in human beings that was rife in Africa.

Livingstone was in England in 1857. The news of his journey across Africa had, of course, preceded him and this had created interest and enthusiasm among the British public for Africa. There is little doubt that it was the detail of his recorded travels that made his work so significant. He has nothing but

²⁷George Seaver, David Livingstone: His Life and Letters (New York, 1957), p. 267.

praise for the Africans he met; this was equalled by his contempt for the Arab and African slave trader. On the opposite side, the Africans accompanying him had nothing to complain about in his behaviour towards them. This is borne out by the fact that when he died those who were with him did not desert him but carried his body to the coast from Ujiji to Zanzibar. On his return to England he found a public waiting to hear him. His public appeal for missionary work in Africa and for a determined effort to stop the slave trade led to an unprecedented expansion of British missionary work in Africa. What was more impressive was the speed and seriousness with which missionaries of all sects and denominations proceeded to work in Central and East Africa.

During the formation of the new societies in Central and East Africa, of which the Universities Mission to Central Africa was a direct result after his famous speech at Cambridge, Livingstone was out again in Africa. This time he headed an expedition that was sponsored by the British Government. Between 1859 and 1863 he concentrated his efforts on finding out more about the present day Malawi, then the Lake Nyasa area, where he revealed the suitability of the Shire highlands for mission work and settlement. In 1866 he set out from Zanzibar toward the Central African lakes region in an attempt to solve the Nile

source riddle, and also to find the source of the Congo River. Livingstone was undeterred by J. H. Speke's and S. W. Baker's journey which had indeed disproved the possibility that Lake Tanganyika was the source of the Nile system. In 1871 H. M. Stanley found him at Ujiji already broken in health. While Stanley returned to Europe, Livingstone remained to work on Lake Banguwelo region, where he died in 1873. David Livingstone's death coincided with the legal abolition of the Arab slave trade in East Africa. Hitherto the British had concentrated their efforts only towards getting the Sultans of Zanzibar to agree to limit the extent of this trade.

British interest in Zanzibar in the early nineteenth century was mainly humanitarian although, of course, other interests, both economic and political, cannot be ruled out.²⁸ There is little doubt that their interest in ending the slave trade still ranked high, and it was certainly their desire to control the slave trade and to bring it to an eventual end that mainly determined their interests in Zanzibar. In the first part of the century they were still preoccupied with the transatlantic slave trade and they did not, therefore, have the money or the men to engage actively in the suppression of the Arab slave trade.

²⁸ Reginald Coupland, East Africa and its Invaders (Oxford, 1938), Chapter XV, passim.

The accounts of the Arab slave trade from British eye-witnesses were yet to come since none had penetrated the interior of East and Central Africa before the midcentury. The British, therefore, decided to work through the Sultan of Zanzibar and to apply pressure to stop him. This policy was bound to bring little result since it aimed at supporting the very personality that gained most from this traffic, not to mention, of course, that the Sultan himself was an active participant in the trade. Revenue from slaves came second to that derived from ivory. However, slaves contributed more to the revenue of Zanzibar and to the Sultan's pocket because they provided the labour force for the cloves that became the chief crop in Zanzibar during the reign of Sayyid Said. Therefore, pressure alone was unlikely to move the Sultan to act.

During the first four decades of the nineteenth century the British succeeded in getting the Sultan to agree to treaties that aimed at limiting the extent of territory through which this trade would operate. In 1822 the Sultan agreed to limit slave trade within his dominions, thus excluding India, Persia and Aden, and in 1845, to limit it to his African dominions. Effective operation of the agreements needed more than seven cruisers hitherto patrolling the Indian Ocean. More importantly, this economic system was the basis of life of the Arab-Swahili society on the coast and the

offshore islands, at the head of which was the Sultan of Zanzibar. This system appeared to have been accepted by what we would call, for lack of a better term, upper class Africans on the mainland, most of whom had risen to this class through this economic system. It was no wonder then that British pressure and restrictive acts were agreed to by the Sultan only for political reasons but were not observed.

After the midcentury the climate of opinion began to change. For one thing the British could now divert their efforts from the Atlantic slave trade towards the East African slave trade. More importantly, just as it appeared that British interests in stopping the slave trade had been overspent with the waning of the Atlantic slave trade, their emotions and, more so, their humanitarianism, were again stirred by horrifying accounts of the destruction and depopulation of the interior of East and Central Africa so vividly narrated by David Livingstone and his contemporaries. From their accounts the public was able to get a picture of the devastation wrought in the interior by the Arab-Swahili slave-ivory trader. Villages, crops and huts were destroyed and burned to the ground. As already shown, the Africans participated in the selling of their fellow Africans because at that time slave trade and ivory trade were extremely lucrative, and the African chiefs

participating in it had joined the class that enriched itself by the exploitation of the weaker class. David Livingstone and his contemporaries proved, of course, that there was increasing trade in slaves; the number of slaves reaching and going through Kilwa rose sharply from the 1840's through the 1860's, and it had reached a fantastic peak on the eve of the abolition of the trade. In 1850 Krapf estimated that Kilwa was handling an annual number of about 12,000 slaves; in 1862 the number had risen to 18,500 and in 1866 to 22,000.²⁹ It is true that Kilwa, as the main slave port, handled most of the slaves, and it is reasonable to argue that the numbers exported through the northern ports from Kenya, for example, were very few. Nonetheless, it is reasonable to believe that at a time of increasing exportation of slaves from the mainland, and the increase in the use of firearms, Mombasa handled an increasing number of slaves. In 1885 William Jones, who accompanied Bishop James Hannington on his expedition to Buganda, reported large numbers of ruthless Swahili traders who "attacked the Wakikuyu in their forest homes, killing some and kidnapping others; so that there is little

²⁹Oliver, The Missionary Factor in East Africa, p.15 footnote; and Reginald Coupland, The Exploitation of East Africa, 1856-1890 (London, 1939), Ch. VI, passim.

wonder if they have lost faith in the Swahili caravans."³⁰

The British public was moved by these alarming accounts from their own men who bore witness to the events in the heart of East and Central Africa. This aroused public opinion in Britain to act, and so to complete the work they had so earnestly started with the Act of 1807 and the Emancipation Act of 1833. Sir Bartle Frere was appointed to head a mission to negotiate, in 1873, with the Sultan of Zanzibar, a treaty for the abolition of the slave trade on the east coast. The Sultan was forced to agree to the abolition of the slave trade, and with the signing of the treaty and the closing of the Zanzibar slave market ended the age-old East African slave trade. Well might Livingstone have rejoiced at the legal end to the slave trade, to the abolition of which he had devoted his life. But he died in May, two months before Sultan Barghash bin Said signed the treaty.³¹ His eternal rest was well justified though, the more so since the missionary occupation of Central and East Africa he had so much advocated, and indeed set in motion, was, by 1873, in full force. Moreover, it was to be a permanent occupation.

³⁰ E. C. Dawson, James Hannington - First Bishop of East Equatorial Africa (London, 1887), p. 396.

³¹ Coupland, Exploitation of East Africa, pp. 211-216.

David Livingstone's death in the country he had publicized from 1857 brought to a climax the challenge and enthusiasm he had already aroused in the British public, and especially among missionaries, to work in Africa and so to bring an end to the slave trade. From 1873 there issued from Britain a missionary race to occupy Central and East Africa which was perhaps comparable in strength and in speed to the political race for the occupation of the same territories.

For Central Africa there was already formed the U. M. C. A. In 1874 the Livingstonia Free Church approved a plan to start work in Malawi in memory of David Livingstone and, in the following year, the Livingstonia mission was started at Cape MacLear at the southern tip of Lake Nyasa. This station was later transferred to its permanent site on the more suitable western shore of the lake.³² In 1876 the Established Church of Scotland founded the Blantyre Missions in the interior of Malawi on the Shire highlands.³³ The U. M. C. A. sent out its first party to establish a mission in Central Africa which was to be the Zambezi Mission under Bishop Charles Frederick

³² Groves, op. cit., II, pp. 302-303.

³³ Ibid.

Mackenzie. The first ill-fated U. M. C. A. station was established at Magomero in 1861 in the Shire Valley among the Nyanja, but within the slave-trading territory of the Yao living to the east of the lake, south of the River Rovuma.³⁴ At Magomero they had about two hundred freed slaves but the Yao slaving activities and their frequent and devastating attacks on Nyanja villages brought this first mission station to an abrupt end. Bishop Mackenzie died while exploring the Zambezi River in January, 1863.³⁵ Bishop William George Tozer, who succeeded Mackenzie the same year, decided to move the mission, in November, to Zanzibar, where he was sure of protection from the Sultan and toleration of his converts.³⁶ Zanzibar was to be a convenient base for expansion into the mainland of Tanganyika. The fact that the U. M. C. A. cathedral rose where the slave market was is, in itself, significant. However, towards the end of the decade expansion in the mainland had begun and a permanent station was established at Magila in the Bondei country. In 1878 another station was established at Newala in south Tanganyika.³⁷

In Kenya the impact of Livingstone had been felt before his death. In 1862 the United Methodist Free Church established its

³⁴Groves, op. cit., II, pp.195-196.

³⁵Ibid., p.197.

³⁶Ibid., p.283.

³⁷Ibid., p.284.

first station at Ribe about sixteen miles from Mombasa, similar to Rabai C.M.S. station among the Nyika. Thomas Wakefield began the mission and was joined by Charles New the following year. It was Charles Cheetham, a lay official of the Foreign Mission Committee of the United Methodist Free Church who, impressed by the accounts of Krapf in his book that was published in 1860, drew the attention of the Committee to the East African field. However, there was doubtless a connection between the enthusiasm of the Foreign Committee of the U. M. F. C. in East Africa and the new missionary zeal set in motion by David Livingstone.³⁸

The C. M. S. launched a new effort in East Africa with an enthusiasm comparable to that shown in Sierra Leone towards the end of the first decade of the nineteenth century. As in Sierra Leone, the C. M. S. aimed at expanding into the interior with the help of freed slave agents. Edward Hutchinson, the Lay Secretary of the C. M. S., had prepared the C. M. S. at home for the task of forming a freed slave settlement in East Africa, and the society had been in the forefront of the agitation for the abolition of the East African slave trade in the sixties. When Sir Bartle Frere was negotiating the treaty for the abolition of the East African slave trade, he recommended the formation of a freed slave settle-

³⁸Ibid., pp. 288-289.

ment in East Africa, to be supported by the British Government.³⁹ He had no doubt that this task would be best accomplished by the missionary societies already established in East Africa to whose temporary care he made over the freed slaves. The C.M.S. took up this task with the larger aim of establishing a Christian freed slave settlement from whom would come evangelists to carry Christianity to the pagan interior. With the approval of the government the C. M. S. Committee at Salisbury Square began the freed slave settlement at Freretown in 1874. This was to be the permanent occupation of Kenya by the C. M. S. The Presbyterians from the home country of David Livingstone came to Kenya eighteen years after Livingstone's death.

³⁹ Bartle Frere to Granville, April 1, 1873, F.O. 84/1391, P. R. O.

CHAPTER I

THE BRITISH PROTESTANT MISSIONS AT MOMBASA COAST AND THE INTERIOR

1874 - 1890

The Freed Slave Settlement and Politics with the Arabs, 1874-1890

More than any other missionary organisation in East Africa, the Church Missionary Society was concerned with the fate of the freed slaves. The C.M.S. decided to establish a freed slave settlement on the East coast at the time when the Society began to campaign actively for the abolition of the East African slave trade in the 1860's.¹ The C.M.S. had a precedent for the establishment of such a colony in Sierra Leone colony, which was founded in 1788 as a home for repatriated slaves, by philanthropists. In 1791 Sierra Leone Company was formed by the philanthropists and bankers to introduce commerce and Christianity into the colony.² The first freed slaves arrived from England in 1789. They were joined by others from Nova Scotia in 1792 and from the United States in 1800. In 1808 Sierra Leone became a Crown colony. The previous year, however, the Atlantic slave trade

¹ Edward Hutchinson, The Slave Trade of East Africa (London, 1874), pp. 82-83.

² Eugene Stock, The History of the Church Missionary Society, 4 vols. (London, 1899-1916), Vol. I, pp. 46, 94.

was abolished, and Sierra Leone became a home for those slaves who were liberated while on the Atlantic ocean on their way to the New World.³

The C. M. S. was founded in 1799 and among its founders were men who had taken a leading part in the formation of the Sierra Leone Company.⁴ It was therefore natural that the C.M.S. made it its first task to begin missionary work among the liberated slaves in Sierra Leone, and led the way for other missionary societies to follow. In 1804 the first missionaries of the C.M.S. arrived in the colony.⁵ Here the C. M. S. hoped to form a nucleus of African evangelists and catechists to be the chief agents of Christianity to their tribesmen in the interior of West Africa. By 1873, when the East African slave trade was abolished, these agents had spread the gospel across West Africa. Samuel Crowther, a freed slave, was consecrated the Bishop of the Niger pastorate in 1864.⁶

³ Arthur Porter, Creoledom, A Study of the Development of Freetown Society (London, 1963), pp. 10-11, 19-34.

⁴ Stock, I, pp. 63-70.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 94-95, 156-157.

⁶ J. F. Ade Ajayi, Christian Missions in Nigeria 1841-1891: The Making of a New Elite (London, 1965), pp. 194-195.

With this precedent then, and especially the success of the liberated slaves in the evangelization of the interior of West Africa, the C.M.S. felt confident of equal success in East Africa. Prior to 1873 slaves freed by the British naval cruisers patrolling the Indian Ocean were invariably turned over to the missions already in East Africa or to private individuals.⁷ A large number of those who were freed were sent to India which was then under the British.⁸ However, the British naval patrol ships were able to rescue only a few slaves from Arab dhows before 1873. In 1873, with the abolition of the East African slave trade, it became necessary to establish a freed slave settlement on the East coast to accommodate the large numbers of slaves who would be liberated. With the support of the British government, the C.M.S. therefore began a freed slave settlement at Freretown, ten miles from Mombasa in 1874.⁹

William Salt Price, for long the superintendent of the C.M.S. Bombay mission at Sharanpur, where, among other things, he

⁷Frere to Granville, April 5, 1873, F. O. 84/1390, P.R.O., London.

⁸C.M.S. Proceedings, 1860-1861, pp. 73-74.

⁹Price to Wright, May 17, 1875, C A5/017, C.M.S. Archives, London.

had a small colony of African Christians liberated in the Indian Ocean, was appointed the first superintendent. In 1875 the African Christians at Sharanpur moved to Freretown to help Price with the beginning of Freretown. Only about 150 young men and women returned to Freretown, having accepted the offer of the C.M.S. Committee of free passage from Bombay to East Africa "with a view to helping [Price] in one way or another to plant a freed slave colony in connection with [the] Mombasa Mission."¹⁰

On his arrival at Freretown, Price secured land on which to settle the liberated slaves. In 1875 he was able to buy 200 acres of fertile land from the local Arabs.¹¹ From the early days of Henry Venn, the C.M.S. secretary at Salisbury Square from 1841 to 1872, the C.M.S. aimed at making their overseas missions self-supporting and self-governing. They were thus to have their own independent native churches with authority in the mission field. Price, therefore, secured land for the freed slaves to subsist on and for the mission to grow crops on for its self-support.

¹⁰ W. S. Price. Report to the Secretary, C.M.S. on the "Future Prospects of the East African Mission," October 6, 1882; 03 A5/01, C.M.S. Archives, London.

¹¹ Stock, III, p. 85.

Freretown was to be all things at once. First, it was to be a buffer and a deterrent to any further slave trafficking from the interior; and then, of course, it was to be a training ground for future African evangelists and catechists who, like the liberated slaves in Sierra Leone, were to spread Christianity to the interior of Kenya and East Africa. Of the choice of Freretown, Edward Hutchinson had said,

[it] should be sufficiently near the inland slave trade to permit an influence for good to radiate among the slave-collecting tribes and at the same time command a sufficient extent of territory to utilise to the utmost the labour stored up in such a settlement. A settlement so selected might, in the near future, become a self-supporting organised community.¹²

For the internal administration of the colony, Price was to serve as a civil and spiritual head; he assumed the role of the chief, or Wali, and the settlers looked to him for economic support, for law and order, and for military support.¹³ Price set up a small police force to enforce the colony's laws. This independent mission colony was to exist in the middle of the predominantly Muslim coast around Mombasa but it was to be inde-

¹² Hutchinson, pp. 86-87.

¹³ Roland Oliver, The Missionary Factor in East Africa (London, 1952), p. 51.

pendent from the jurisdiction of the Wali of Mombasa, its civil head.¹⁴ Later mission stations formed after 1874 (and there came to be about eight, between 1874 and 1890) on the Mombasa coast became also independent mission colonies with their own administration and politics that differed markedly from either those of the Arabs on the coast or those of the tribes immediate to the coast.

In 1876 Price left Freretown for England and J. A. Lamb from the Yoruba mission on the West coast succeeded him. At the same time the C.M.S. established the post of lay superintendent at Freretown to look to the secular work of the settlement, to supervise cultivation and to adjudicate and punish offenders.¹⁵ All missionary superintendents in the various mission stations that were established performed the same function. As heads of the stations they dispensed justice. However, outside the colonies, their judicial functions were not recognised by either the Council of Elders, the administrative and judicial authority of the tribes near to the coast, or the Wali of Mombasa who ruled the Muslim population of Mombasa.

Once land was secured and an instrument of law and order was instituted at Freretown, there began both the work of

¹⁴Ibid. ¹⁵Stock, III, pp. 89-90.

receiving and resettling the freed slaves, and the main task of expansion along the coast and into the interior of Kenya. The first large batch of liberated slaves were received at Freretown almost immediately. With the help of the Africans from Bombay, better known as Bombay Africans, the missionaries put the adults to work and the young ones to school while those who were ill were taken care of until they were well.¹⁶ From a small population of under 200 in 1874-1875, the population grew to over 3,000 in the period ending in 1890.

Some of the land the mission had purchased was reserved for the families of the freed slaves to whom the mission gave plots of land on which to subsist in order to be independent. The C.M.S. took care of them only temporarily for once they were given the land they were no longer expected to rely on the mission for their subsistence. The adults, however, were required to spend a good deal of their time providing the mission with labour on mission land and in the houses and gardens of the resident European missionaries. The C.M.S. experimented with all sorts of crops in an attempt to find means of becoming self-supporting. The mission tried to grow coffee, cocoanuts, cereals

¹⁶ Binns to Wright, November 2, 1978, C AS/MI-6, C.M.S. Archives, London.

and rubber, but the climate on the coast was not suitable for large-scale agriculture.

The freed slave settlement presented the missionaries with the greatest problems of administration. Here many hundreds of liberated slaves, uprooted from their tribal authority from their early youth, were settled after they had been rescued from the Arabs. While they were slaves they often changed hands from one master to another, one farm to another, and could not, therefore, look forward to a life of order and law while they were slaves. The first challenge to the missionaries was to resettle them into an orderly community where there were laws to obey and organized work to do.

The second lot of settlers joining the mission station were misfits and exiles from their own tribal society in the interior. These were, in many ways, no better than the freed slaves for they were social outcasts whose resettlement and rehabilitation was a job for a more modern, well-qualified social worker than for a single missionary whose main concern was the evangelization of many thousands of souls in the interior of Kenya. Like the liberated slaves, they needed supervision which the missionaries could not provide efficiently without neglecting their major task. It was no wonder that in 1878 William Jones, the African

pastor, complained that he was so pressed with secular work in settling minor cases that he could hardly find time to do pastoral work among the Wanyika.¹⁷ Chancey Maples of the Universities Mission to Central Africa at Newalla in Southern Tanganyika put the problems of association with the freed slaves at Masasi dramatically. He said:

upon the whole...the presence of the returned slave community retarded rather than assisted the work among the tribes. Our great difficulty...at Masasi ...was this. We had to take care of a number of worthless people who not only were not Christians but whose conduct was so bad that there was scarcely any hope of their ever becoming Christians: meanwhile their misdoings, quarrels, and excesses of all kinds took up an untold amount of time, as day after day I had to listen to their disputes and mete out satisfaction to the parties injured by them. . . .¹⁸

The first thing that the missionaries did on receipt of freed slaves, runaway slaves or refugees from the nearby tribes, was to baptise them. This was the condition the missionaries made for residence in their mission stations. Baptism for the freed slaves or the Africans was no indication of conversion on their part. Most of the Africans agreed to be baptised because they were attracted

¹⁷ William Jones to Wright, October 10, 1878, CC A5/MI-6, C.M.S. Archives, London.

¹⁸ Oliver, The Missionary Factor in East Africa, p. 65 footnote.

by the material comforts and wealth of the missions.

Dawnes Shaw, C.M.S. missionary at Freretown, was later to remark caustically in 1886 that the settlers professed Christianity because the mission was the source of income, and the settlers often believed they were paid because they were Christians.¹⁹ The Arabs and the tribes near to the settlement also believed that the missionaries were at Mombasa mainly to support released slaves for which purpose the Home Committee sent the mission large sums of money.²⁰ This belief had serious repercussions for the missionary work among the tribes for they associated Christianity with wealth. Most missionaries could not dispute the fact that they often bribed the Africans to make converts out of them. However, it was not necessary for them to bribe the freed slaves since they could use other means, as they often did, to force them to become Christians. Apart from this situation, the missionaries on the coast--and this was more the case at Rabai and Freretown than elsewhere--were over-zealous about gaining converts. They were misled by the number of freed slaves

¹⁹ Shaw to Lang, December 9, 1886, G3 A5/04, C.M.S. Archives, London.

²⁰ Ibid.

they had baptised, and were wrongly convinced that the baptism would make the converts genuine Christians. It is understandable why William Jones was so over-zealous in baptizing the runaway slaves because, as an African, he wanted to provide as much security for them as he could. As baptism was a condition of settlement on the mission, Jones readily performed the rite to ensure the slaves' escape from Arab slavers. In 1910, many years afterwards, the Assistant District Commissioner of Rabai, Kenneth MacDougall, remarked that

numbers of these adults were baptised by the native Pastor, William Jones, who was at one time in charge of Rabai, with what was admitted by the missionaries themselves to have been excessive zeal, since many of them were very far from having attained to the knowledge of religious matters and the manner of life befitting Christians.²¹

This was certainly the case with almost all the missionaries whose concern seems to have been more the number of nominal Christians than genuine converts.

The missionaries at Mombasa administered the freed slave settlements with an iron hand and ruthlessly punished even minor offenders. The unruly behavior of some of the freed slaves at Freretown warranted mild punishment or even such serious

²¹ Kilifi Political Records, 1910-1912, KEI/12, Kenya Government Archives, Nairobi. (Hereafter referred to as Nairobi Archives.)

punishment as was within the legal province of the superintendent. For example, as a civil overseer of the settlements, he had power, in consultation with the others, to punish the young reasonably; he could cane them much as African parents did their children. As for the adults, it was certainly within the superintendent's power to fine offenders and to withdraw privileges from them. But lay superintendents, Captain W. Russels, 1876-1877,²² and J. R. Streeter, 1877-1881,²³ went beyond this, flogging and imprisoning offenders with brutality far exceeding that of the Arab masters to their slaves.²⁴ Lay superintendent Streeter does not seem to have imposed such heavy and cruel punishments for severe offences.

In 1878 F. E. Wingram, the Secretary of the C.M.S., had ruled that missionaries could only flog or imprison offenders as a last resort and only very rarely.²⁵ However, J. R. Streeter at Mombasa, the missionary in charge, A. Menzies and schoolmaster J. W. Handford believed and acted contrary to the view held at Salisbury Square. They argued that flogging and imprison-

²²Stock, III, p. 90. ²³Ibid.

²⁴Helmwood to Streeter, July 6, 1881, Inclosure 3 in Kirk to Granville, July 21, 1881, F. O. 84/1600, No. 289, P. R. O.

²⁵Wingram to Streeter, February 5, 1878, C A5/L2, C.M.S. Archives, London.

ment could best reform the sinful African, that the barbarism and heathenism of the African could only be changed by such heavy punishments, and that they were punishing the flesh so that the souls of their patients might be cured. Menzies pointed out that such heavy punishments had been justified by the results so far obtained. He said,

It is very important to be rightly informed as to the desperate character of some of those who were beaten to see that their punishment was a stern necessity and also that in very many instances the punishment has been followed by complete reformation.²⁶

At the Blantyre Mission the Church of Scotland was similarly notable for its brutality in punishing cases of theft, lying, rape and drunkenness, and sometimes went to the extent of sentencing offenders to death. European travellers drew the attention of the British public to these brutalities. Bishop Edward Steere had written, in 1882, to warn the missionaries of the U. M. C. A. at Masasi against usurping the power and jurisdiction of the legally constituted tribal authorities and undermining the confidence of the Africans in

²⁶ Menzies to Stock, July 12, 1881, G3 A5/01, C. M. S. Archives, London.

them.²⁷ The length to which the pioneer missionaries went to give themselves judicial and magisterial powers in areas where there were legally constituted tribal authorities is inexcusable, as it cannot be argued that they were filling a judicial vacuum or that they were providing peace where anarchy reigned. Tribal authorities did sentence offenders to death but only in cases of murder, and certainly not for such offences as the C.M.S. would have done or the C.S.M. at Blantyre did. The missionaries posed as chiefs but in their excess of evangelical zeal did not bother to learn how these chiefs ruled and therefore became more ruthless than the worst of chiefs.

²⁷Bishop Steere to Chancey Maples, May 10, 1882, Inclosure in Price Report 1882.

[Maples] No one can regret more than I do that any part of your management should be thought injudicious, and it is after all but a small part. However when attention is called to it, I have no choice but to forbid altogether all beating of women under your jurisdiction or by your order, and to forbid all receiving of secret accusations, and to warn you not to comment upon the work of other branches of the Mission. . . .

As Missionaries we have the right of admitting to Church privileges and suspending or withdrawing them and ultimately of expulsion by final excommunication. In all this we ought to advise with the Clergy and Laity under us, but the ultimate authority is ours.

Politically we have no right at all, and can only live in the country by the permission or sufferance of the people we find there. There can therefore be no formal administration of justice, or claim to independence or anything like making war. We must get such justice as we can and if our position becomes intolerable we must choose between becoming martyrs and leaving the place.

But it was more the usurpation by J. R. Streeter, the superintendent of Freretown, of the power and jurisdiction of the Wali of Mombasa over the Arabs and of the Arabs over the slaves rather than the malpractices in the internal administration of the settlements, that caused the missionaries the most trouble with the Arab authorities and precipitated an inquiry into the administration of the mission in 1881. The Arabs and the Swahili, already incensed with the presence of the missionaries and the day-to-day attraction that they offered to the slaves to run away, found good cause to accuse them of the usurpation of the power of the Wali. From 1878 to 1880 Streeter had flogged and imprisoned not only the settlers on the settlement but also slaves and a few Arabs outside the settlement, probably on the pretext that they had entered the settlement and committed some offence. The Wali and his elders protested and accused the superintendent of usurping their authority. In 1881 the Sultan made representation to the Consul,²⁸ Sir John Kirk, to investigate the charges brought by his citizens against the missionaries, who were British citizens. Frederick Holmwood, the Vice Consul, accompanied by Captain Mather Byles, went to Mombasa to investigate and hear the charges.

²⁸ Sultan of Zanzibar to Kirk, June 10, 1881, Inclosure 3 in Kirk to Granville July 20, 1881, F. O. 84/1600, P. R. O.

The evidence produced before the Commissioners at an open hearing attended by the Wali and his Arab elders and by the missionaries, Streeter and Menzies, proved that Streeter had inflicted physical injuries on the citizens of the Sultan. He was therefore guilty of having usurped the power of the Wali over his citizens for which a civil suit could be brought against him. However, Holmwood persuaded the Wali and the Arab elders to settle the case out of court.²⁹

But the case against the missionaries did not rest here. The Bombay Africans at the mission had suffered indiscriminate punishment although they were often innocent; this was done probably to silence them since they were the most articulate and politically conscious of the settlers. They provided a more serious threat in that they were an educated class of Africans, and knew that the superintendent had no magisterial powers. In 1881, however, Tom Smith, a Bombay African artisan at Freretown, whom Streeter had flogged and imprisoned, together with others, female and male alike, took the opportunity of the inquiry and petitioned Holmwood to enquire into the cruelties and malpractices in the administration of Freretown.³⁰ He pointed out that the missionaries, Streeter especially, had assumed magisterial powers outside their jurisdiction as ad-

²⁹ Holmwood to Dr. Kirk, July 7, 1881, Inclosure 11 in Kirk to Granville, July 20, 1881, F.O. 84/1600, No. 288, P.R.O.

³⁰ Ibid.

ministrators of the mission station. To be sure the Arabs had drawn the attention of the Commissioners to the malpractices in the administration of the settlement. They pointed out that an inquiry there would reveal matters far worse than hitherto brought to light.³¹ In 1881 the Rev. Menzies reported that Tom Smith

was the first to accuse them of cruelties and of acting illegally.

He said

he [Tom] was on board the next day, early, and furnished the Consul with the names of all who had been beaten or imprisoned by Streeter within the past three years. He then told me [Menzies], to my astonishment, that Mr. Streeter was acting illegally in punishing the people as he held no magisterial powers.³²

The wonder is that the missionaries, although aware that the Bombay Africans were well-educated and articulate, assumed that they would not know of the social injustices and that the missionaries were acting illegally by sentencing them to prison or to be flogged. Streeter had earlier written to say that some of them were teachers and catechists, anxious for the welfare of their country;³³

³¹Ibid.

³²Menzies to Stock, July 12, 1881, G3 A5/01, C.M.S. Archives, London.

³³Streeter to Hutchinson, June 21, 1881, G3 A5/027, C.M.S. Archives, London.

nonetheless, he overlooked the possibility that they were aware of his injustices. Only Price consistently praised them for their help.³⁴

The problem between the white missionaries and the educated Africans in the missions raised more important issues of responsibility and the role that the white missionaries were prepared to give the African Christians under them in the eighties and early nineties. Salisbury Square sent William Price to Freretown as a Special Commissioner to enquire into the administration and the working of the mission. He was also to make recommendations on plans for the future.³⁵ With respect to the actions of the missionaries, Price agreed with the reports of Holmwood that Streeter was guilty. Price had cause to suspect that Menzies did not welcome an investigation of Mombasa Mission from Salisbury Square, or even from the Consul General. The Mombasa Mission was Price's own child and it could not be expected that it be discontinued. He also agreed with the Commissioner's recommendation that Streeter, Menzies and Handford

³⁴Price Report, p. 5.

³⁵Stock, III, p. 91.

should be removed from Freretown in the interests of the mission.³⁶

The complaints of the Bombay Africans and the freed slaves were fully justified as Holmwood and Mather Byles found when they conducted an investigation into the mission station at Freretown immediately after the complaints were launched. Many of those who were punished came forward to show the injuries done to them. Holmwood commented:

The ocular proofs as to the severity of these floggings . . . greatly astonished and shocked us, and I must tell you [Streeter] that in cases where the slaves of the Arabs apply to our Agency showing such traces of ill-treatment, the Sultan is at once asked to free the slaves on the grounds that persons inflicting such injustices are unfit to be instructed with the charge of human lives.³⁷

Captain Mather Byles, who had accompanied Holmwood, was even more vocal. He wrote:

Since I have been on the East Indian Station I have been the means of freeing several fugitive slaves on account of ill-treatment by their masters, but none of them have been beaten as severely as the two men I saw at the Mission.³⁸

On the coast the population was predominantly Muslim. The

³⁶Price Report, p. 2.

³⁷Holmwood to Streeter, July 6, 1881, Inclosure 3 in Kirk to Granville, July 21, 1881, F.O. 84/1600, P.R.O.

³⁸Captain Byles to Captain Brownrigg, July 12, 1881, Inclosure 4, Ibid., P.R.O.

cultural and religious differences between the Muslim population and the missionaries with their mission enclaves were so sharp that violent open clashes were soon to occur. The Arab population and the Swahili Mohamedans became increasingly antagonistic towards the mission colonies in their midst. The Swahili-Arab slave dealers and the Arab aristocracy, which Sir Arthur Hardinge wanted maintained in the late nineties, and whose economic well-being was dependent upon slave labour, had every reason to work against the missionaries. For one thing, their coming almost inevitably meant the end of the still flourishing slave trade in the interior and of slavery, upon which the economy of the Arabs was based. The end of slavery would certainly bring economic ruin to the Arabs.

Almost at once the missionaries at Mombasa began to preach against Islam and against slavery, both fundamental elements of the Arab culture. But of more immediate concern to the Arabs was the attraction of the mission stations to the Arab slaves on the coast. The missions did not make it a secret that they wanted slavery to be abolished. They did not even hide the fact that they offered shelter and homes to slaves running away from their Arab masters. They gave them land to cultivate and build on, and helped them to form alliances with women on the

station, thus usurping the power of their Arab masters. Price noted in his journal on 21 December 1875:

Married fourteen couples of the freed slaves. The men and women were grouped apart, and then the men, as their names came up, were asked to name the objects of their choice. This, in most cases, they were unable to do, and there was nothing for it but the would-be husband to enter the charmed circle and lead off the object of his affection.³⁹

The doors of the British Protestant missions at the coast were open not only to slaves running away from their Arab masters, but also to any African wanting to settle there and, in time, to become Christian. As for the Nyika tribe, the cohesion of the Kayas, into which the tribe was divided for administrative purposes, was too tight and too lasting to allow any mass migrations of their people to the mission stations.⁴⁰ The mission stations and the teaching of the missionaries were strange. It was no wonder that, save in exceptional cases such as during famines which were frequent here, the only people who migrated into the mission stations, apart from the runaway slaves, were either tribal social misfits or political exiles.

³⁹ Stock, III, pp. 87-88, quoting Price Journal, record for December 21, 1875.

⁴⁰ Spencer Trimingham, Islam in East Africa (Oxford, 1964), pp. 23-29.

The first real danger to the missions on the coast came from the Arabs. The Arabs began to lose their labor force, the slaves, to the missions where the missionaries used them as a labor force while pretending that the work they did was free. The C. M. S. especially used force to procure labor from the settlers for the development of their estates and gardens. They allowed them to settle, offered them protection and treated them when they became ill, only on condition that they became Christians and provided the labor force the missionaries often required. The Arabs could not understand why the missions, and those who supported them, believed that this form of slavery in the missions was any different from that from which they were rescuing the Africans. Worse still for the Arabs was that the state of their farms deteriorated with the loss of slave labor to the missions while the same labor made the estates of the missions clean and productive. In 1880 Sir John Kirk found that a considerable piece of ground at Rabai had been brought under cultivation by the fugitive slaves so that the Arabs on the opposite ridge could look on their own estates going to ruin for want of hands working for the missions.⁴¹

⁴¹Kirk to Granville, October 19, 1880, F. O. 84/1575, P.R.O.

Most of the missionaries noticed an undercurrent of Arab opposition from the very beginning. In 1876 the C.M.S. medical missionary at Freretown, W. E. Forster, reported

we are continually mixed up with political matters, the Arabs and Swahili are strongly antagonistic. . . . The English government knows how matters at present are but keeps in the background; this colony is being used as a cat's-paw. . . . Oh, but let not the flag of Jesus be united to that of Herod.⁴²

Again, Binns, reporting that they had a number of runaway slaves from the Girima, wrote, "their owners are incensed against me for allowing them to remain here and last week they came down to demand them. . . ."⁴³ Binns had further refused to force them out of the settlement. The threat of an attack on the mission by the disgruntled slave-owners seemed probable.

In 1883 the Arabs at Mombasa openly attacked the mission stations.⁴⁴ They began first with an attack on Fulladoyo, Pentagoa, and Makongeni, all independent colonies of runaway slaves. Slaves running away from their Arab masters often formed their own inde-

⁴²Forster to Wright, Annual Report, April 30, 1876, C A5/MI-6, C.M.S. Archives, London.

⁴³Binns to Wright, October 5, 1879, C A5/MI-6, C.M.S. Archives, London.

⁴⁴Stock, III, p. 92.

pendent settlements in the interior but a little distance away from them. Such colonies became more common after 1880 when the Consul General, Sir John Kirk, rebuked the missions for harbouring the runaway slaves against their Arab masters. The missions had agreed to refrain from doing so officially although, in fact, they continued to do so secretly. Nonetheless the doors of the missions were not as ajar as they had been.

The first runaway slaves joined the settlement in 1879; a few began to make their way to the interior and joined Mbaruk who was still at large. Others, however, found their own leaders and moved into the interior to found independent settlements. Kirk said there had been formed, at various times, many such settlements of runaway slaves, some of which were recognised by the Sultan. The formation of such settlements certainly disproves later arguments by Arabophiles that the slaves would prefer to remain with their masters rather than to gain their freedom. There is no record of the number in each of the settlements but there were at least half a dozen such independent settlements; a very large number in comparison with the coastal population and area.⁴⁵ They preferred to venture into the interior rather than to live amidst often hostile tribesmen

⁴⁵Frederick Lugard, The Rise of Our East African Empire, 2 vols. (London, 1893), Vol. I, pp. 222-236 passim.

who, like the Giriama, would take the opportunity of enslaving them and selling them to the coast. Freedom was priceless to them.

The C. M. S and the U. M. F. C. lost their chance of gaining converts among the settlements of runaway slaves who would certainly have responded to the call of the missionaries had they been sure of protection from the Arabs. Fulladoyo, a runaway slave settlement founded in about 1878, is a typical example. From the accounts of the C. M. S. missionaries, the settlement was founded by Abe Side who had moved from Petangoa where another leader, Abingoa, had gathered about thirty families in 1876 and began to learn the Book.⁴⁶ Binns and William Chancellor visited there in 1876. Henry Parker, the second Bishop of East Equatorial Africa Mission, 1886-1888, also visited the settlement in 1886.⁴⁷ The C. M. S. turned down the request of the settlers for a mission teacher due to prior claims of Rahai and Freretown. In about 1878 the settlers moved from Petangoa to Fulladoyo, partly because of a dispute over succes-

⁴⁶Parker to Lang, December 21, 1886, G3 A5/04, C.M.S. Archives, London.

⁴⁷Ibid.

sion after the death of Abingoa, and partly because Fulladoyo was a more fertile place. Abe Side led the move to Fulladoyo.

Abe Side seems to have been an earlier convert of the C.M.S. He was not deterred by the refusal of the C.M.S. to give them a teacher and protection. His initial followers were referred to as Giriama Christians. It is possible that his followers were all runaway slaves, though we cannot rule out the possibility that they might also have been men and women from the nearby tribes, especially the Nyika. The first possibility seems plausible especially when, from 1878 onwards, more runaway slaves seeking freedom from their Arab slavers joined the settlement. By 1880 Fulladoyo had grown into a settlement of "seven hundred. . . [the settlers] had all joined the Book and built a commodious Church."⁴⁸

Contrary to the findings of John Kirk, who had hastily remarked that such settlements became centers of Slave Trade, William Price visited Fulladoyo in 1882 and found

a well-ordered community, all respecting the orders of Abe Side. [It was] quite a model little town with neat well-built houses, good wide streets conveniently laid out and surrounded by shambas rich in Indian corn.⁴⁹

⁴⁸Parker to Lang, December 21, 1886, G3 A5/04, C.M.S. Archives, London.

⁴⁹Price to Col. Smiles, March 7, 1882, G3 A5/01, C.M.S. Archives, London.

Then the fears of attack from the Arabs being widespread after 1880, Abe Side consulted with Price and probably repeated his request for C.M.S. support. In 1882 Marshall Lang, one of the C.M.S. secretaries at Salisbury Square, again refused to allow the C.M.S. to move in and help them and further warned the missionaries at Mombasa not to identify themselves with what were called "very interesting but irregular settlements."⁵⁰ In 1885, two years after the Arabs had destroyed and wiped out Fulladoyo, the C.M.S. regretted that they had neglected to support "what seemed at one time so promising a development of indigenous Christianity."⁵¹

The importance of the attack on Fulladoyo is revealed by the size of the army which the Arabs on the coast were able to muster. In the war between the Sultan and the rebel Mbaruk of Gazi in 1876, the Arabs of Mombasa supplied only thirty guns in response to the orders issued by the Sultan for them to do so.⁵²

⁵⁰ Lang to Binns, June 22, 1883, G3 A5/L3, C.M.S. Archives, London.

⁵¹ Lang to Taylor, July 7, 1885, G3 A5/L3, C.M.S. Archives, London.

⁵² Kirk to Granville, November 9, 1883, F.O. 84/1645, P.R.O.

But in the attack which the Arabs of Mombasa launched on the missions to recover their slaves, they raised a contingent of 3,000 armed men.⁵³ The Arabs explored all the legal channels open to them before they finally attacked the missions in 1883. Between 1879 and 1880 they had protested to the Wali of Mombasa that the missions were harbouring their slaves illegally and, further, that the missionaries had handled them roughly and sometimes committed murder when individual slave owners went to them to recover their slaves. It was no longer safe for an Arab to go singly near the missions. The Wali of Mombasa made several representations to the Sultan on their behalf.⁵⁴ Early in October, 1879 he had sent a certain Majid bin Jabr to see the Sultan in person regarding their complaints. The climax was reached when the Arabs and the representatives of the twelve families at Mombasa sent a memorial to the Sultan. The memorial read:

Our servants have. . . submitted to anything at the hands of the Christians who have beaten them, carried off their slaves--stopped the paths and taken fines and every day this is becoming more common.

⁵³ Governor of Mombasa to Sayyid Barghash, September 8, 1880, Inclosure 2 in Kirk to Granville, September 22, 1880, F.O. 84/1575, P. R. O.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

The elders and chiefs of the town went to the Christians to speak with them on the subject, they imagined that possibly they had an order from our master or from the Consul General. We are under you and your protection but the head of every one is full.⁵⁵

Sir John Kirk came to Mombasa in 1880 to try to find a solution to the problem. He held a baraza with the representatives of the Arabs and the missions; Harry Binns and Lay Superintendent Streeter represented the C.M.S. The representative of the U.M.F.C. was not there, for the role of that society in this issue was insignificant. Kirk told the missions previously of the position of the slaves at Mombasa. He blamed them for harbouring the slaves of the Arabs. He said:

I have before written so fully to Mr. Streeter that no doubt can exist as to the view I take of the position which is that as the law now stands an Englishman has no right to retain fugitive slaves against the will of their owners and the Sultan's authorities, and that this being so it is cruel to induce those poor people to trust to a protection which we are not in a position to give.⁵⁶

Each side had begun to make preparations for the impending clash in 1879. The missionaries at Mombasa who had provoked the

⁵⁵Memorial from the Arabs and Twelve Families of Mombasa, Inclosure 1 in Kirk to Granville, September 22, 1880, F. O. 84/1575, P. R. O.

⁵⁶Kirk to Lord Salisbury, January 9, 1880, F. O. 84/1574, P. R. O.

Arabs were sure that the Arabs would attack them. They began to drill and arm the settlers and stocked the stations with ammunition. In particular, they instigated their inmates to be ready for a servile uprising. The missionaries hoped that all the slaves on the coast would rise against their Arab and Swahili masters and shake off slavery. Slave risings were common in the American slave-owning states, and the missionaries on the East coast of Africa took pains to publicise them among the Africans in the hope that they would emulate what the Negroes did in an attempt to gain their freedom.⁵⁷ The uprising was to begin at Freretown from where the missionaries hoped it would spread all over the coast. Streeter had a large white flag with the word "freedom" marked on it in Swahili characters. This he kept open to view in his house, making it known that when the slaves saw the flag displayed they were to rise and join the mission station to fight for their freedom.⁵⁸ The Arabs, of course, saw the flag and knew what it was meant for. Kirk visited the mission stations around Mombasa in 1880 only to report "the mission houses . . . partook more of the look of a military barrack than the teach-

⁵⁷ Kirk to Granville, October 19, 1880, F. O. 84/1575, P.R.O.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

ing of Christianity. Over the missionary's bed hung two revolvers, there were sniders and cartridge belts."⁵⁹ At Rabbai there was a strong force of Christian soldiers two hundred strong armed with bows and arrows. The missionaries regularly stationed armed guards at convenient places on the road, or sent them out at regular intervals to spy out any surprise attack from the Arabs.⁶⁰

The Arabs, of course, viewed the mobilisation with great alarm. They rightly felt that they were in danger of a general slave uprising all over the coast, a rising instigated and promoted by the missionaries on the coast. The alarm of the Arabs at such mobilization was justified, and preparation for self-defence necessary, when a few of their numbers, often innocent parties, were murdered by the Africans on the mission stations in cold blood. The Arabs, therefore, began to put up military demonstrations in readiness for the impending war, which the missionaries answered by "erecting sand-bags, bundles of timber, and placing a twelve pound rocket in position for defence."⁶¹

⁵⁹ Kirk to Granville, October 19, 1880, F. O. 84/1575, P.R.O.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

Obviously the missionaries were chiefly responsible for the mounting crisis. The awareness of the missions about the situation at Mombasa, and their incessant letters to the press, the Consul General and, particularly, to the public in England, however, awoke the reluctant civil authority to the situation on the coast. It was more the mobilization of the missions than their physical armed strength that scared the Arabs and put off, for five years, any such attack. This was another reason why, even when they finally decided to attack the mission stations, the Arabs began by attacking the defenceless colonies of runaway slaves and attacked Freretown, Rabbai, Ribe, Jomvu, only after they had completely wiped out Fulladoyo in 1883.

The clash between the Arabs and the missions on the coast preceded the scramble for Africa by about a year. It also preceded by a year Arab resistance to alien European rule in East and Central Africa which, Roland Oliver says, was widespread and common in East Africa between 1884 and 1888.⁶² Arab resistance to the coming of Europeans to East and Central Africa was directed first against the missions whose difference in culture inevitably brought them into an open conflict and, second, against the British trading companies established to trade in the

⁶²Oliver, The Missionary Factor in East Africa, p. 116.

area. The open clashes on the Lakes Nyasa-Tanganyika area (in the present Malawi and mainland Tanzania) have been amply documented.⁶³ On Lake Nyasa, Mlozi, a powerful chief, had succeeded in conquering the smaller tribes round about and, in addition, had formed an alliance with the powerful Yao tribe. His trade in ivory was seriously reduced by the entrance of the Livingstonia Company, recently formed to tap the trade in ivory in the area. The Arab trade in slaves was also seriously affected by the campaigns of the missionaries to have it stopped. With the help of the Yao, Mlozi attacked the company's post at Karonga and there arrested the missionaries of the Universities Mission to Central Africa.⁶⁴ Further north in the Lake Tanganyika region, Tippu Tib, another powerful Arab chief, in alliance with Rumaliza, began to work against the missionaries in a last effort to drive them out of their territory.⁶⁵ The White Fathers at Ujiji, for example, were forced out of Karema, their mission station near Tabora. The Arab Swahili, on the route to Ujiji from

⁶³ A. J. Hanna, The Beginnings of Nyasaland and North-Eastern Rhodesia, 1859-1895, (Oxford, 1956), pp. 16-50, 79-105.

⁶⁴ Ibid., pp. 80-81.

⁶⁵ Oliver, The Missionary Factor in East Africa, pp. 110-113.

Zanzibar, became openly hostile to any European and made travel to the Lakes region impossible.⁶⁶

Most of the missionaries in the interior believed that it was the plan of the Sultan of Zanzibar to drive them out in an attempt to reassert his power and authority over his dominions.

Whoever and wherever the real authors of the movement may be [wrote D. P. Jones of London Missionary Society at Ujiji], it is at Zanzibar that their chief actors reside: thence the sinews of war have been furnished and only at that place therefore can the evil be really snipped.⁶⁷

Further inland in the Buganda Kingdom the Arabs, who had been established at the court of Mwanga since the late seventies, certainly created hatred for European missionaries who had been established there since 1875; Mwanga wanted to prevent any further European infiltration into his kingdom. The first Bishop of East Equatorial Africa, James Hannington, was murdered at Busoga on Mwanga's orders,⁶⁸ but the murder had been perpetrated through the machinations of the Arabs who had

⁶⁶Oliver, The Missionary Factor in East Africa, pp. 110-113.

⁶⁷O'Neill to Salisbury, February 3, 1888, F. O. 84/1906, P.R.O.

⁶⁸E. C. Dawson, Bishop Hannington, First Bishop of East Equatorial Africa: A History of His Life and Work 1847-1885 (London, 1887), pp. 417-418.

warned him of Europeans coming from the East to take his country.

Of particular concern in this thesis are the events that took place around Mombasa, beginning with the Arab attack on the mission stations and the independent settlements of runaway slaves in 1883. Here we are particularly concerned with the actions and the role of the missionaries in precipitating the clash. The ill-feeling and hostility of the Arab population to the missions bear witness even more spectacularly to the general situation. But here the seeds of hatred between them had been sown early, in 1874, when the presence of the missionaries and of the Freretown freed slave settlement began to undermine the basis upon which the economy and culture of the Arab society was founded. The mission stations heralded the end of slavery and, more immediately, began to drain the Arab plantations of their slaves. This was, therefore, a clash between two sharply different cultures, one believing in slavery and the other sharply opposed to it.

Oliver, summing up the situation in East and Central Africa, wrote:

by 1888 the missions were everywhere threatened, in many places driven out. . . by commercial freebooters from Zanzibar and Oman who were making a last des-

perate bid to keep their dominion in East Africa.⁶⁹

This was certainly true of the mainland. But at Mombasa it was more the Arab plantation owners whose farm labor the missions were attracting and using who precipitated the clash. The letters of the Arabs to the Wali and their complaints to John Kirk and Holmwood, in 1881, do not bring out the fact that their ivory trade had been threatened. Rather, it was the loss of slave labor, without which their economy would be completely ruined, of which they complained.

The Arab fear of European occupation of their territory, which they blamed the missionaries for initiating, assumed greater significance with the increase of European activities at Zanzibar; in particular the formation of the German East African Company in 1884. In 1885 the Germans obtained the support of the British in forcing the Sultan to agree to their claim for the mainland territory which the German company planned to occupy and develop commercially. The Arabs of Mombasa were even more surprised when the two powers ignored the Sultan's claim and divided the East African coast between them, in 1886. Since 1832, when he had established his capital at Zanzibar, the Sultan had received British support. Support for native rulers in Africa

⁶⁹Oliver, The Missionary Factor in East Africa, p. 116.

was generally the policy of the British government during this period. Even when the Sultan or the Arabs at Mombasa requested British protection (as in the 1820's when Owen established his protectorate over Mombasa) only to be abandoned on instructions from the Colonial Office, the various British governments stuck to their policy of reluctance to acquire territories in Africa, up to 1885.

However, the support for the German claim over Tanganyika in 1885 signified a sharp change in British policy over the area and toward Zanzibar. This became real the following year when, under the Anglo-German agreement, the coast was divided between them. In 1888 Lord Salisbury, the Conservative prime minister, gave a charter to the Imperial British East Africa Company formed the previous year by William MacKinnon. Company rule was a convenient way through which the British government thought to evade direct responsibility overseas.⁷⁰ Two years later the division of the mainland of East Africa between Britain and Germany was completed. The line drawn by the two powers in 1886, as a boundary of their spheres of influence, was extended west of Lake Victoria to place Uganda under British rule. At the same time Germany agreed

⁷⁰Roland Oliver and Gervase Mathew (eds.), History of East Africa, Vol. I (Oxford, 1963), p. 394.

to recognise a British protectorate over Zanzibar in exchange for Heligoland.

Almost simultaneously with the coming of the Europeans and the delimitation treaty, open Arab resistance spread across the coast. On the River Tana the Arabs, at Kao, attacked the U. M. F. C. station at Golbanti in 1886.⁷¹ The Swahili established at Jomvu seized the opportunity and closed all communication between Freretown and Rabbai between 1887 and 1888, thus cutting supply lines and communication between them.⁷² The missionaries answered by calling upon the British government to establish law and order, which meant occupation. Up to 1888, however, Arab resistance was sporadic and primarily directed toward mission stations. The Arabs placed the blame for the occupation of Mombasa on the Sultan. The missionaries there believed that the Arabs would cut off whatever loyalty they owed to the Sultan and rise, en masse to defend their country. More important, of course, was the blame they levelled at the missionaries, whom they seriously believed had paved the way for British

⁷¹E. S. Wakefield, Thomas Wakefield, Missionary and Geographical Pioneer in East Equatorial Africa (London, 1904), pp. 257-258.

⁷²Ibid., p. 259.

acquisition of the coastal areas. On September 24 Price minuted:

Disquieting rumours come from Mombasa. The Arabs and Waswauli are angry with the Sultan for having sold them, as they say, to the English company. There are threats of attack from Freretown. The great fear is that slave traffic is doomed.⁷³

The same year the Arabs on the Southern coast, in what became German East Africa, rose against the German Company together with the Africans. Abushiri, who had long challenged the authority of the Sultan, provided the Arabs and Africans with the leadership they wanted. The uprising started at Pangani but the agents of the company had provoked resistance all over the coast.⁷⁴ There were cases where German dogs entered Arab mosques and at Tanga and Pangani the Germans pulled down the Sultan's flag and replaced it with that of the Company. There was the widespread fear among all the Arabs that the Germans would undercut their ivory, slave and rubber trade and bring economic ruin to them. William Price said that the Germans were meeting with opposition everywhere, and their high-handed proceedings had provoked hostility and opposition. "The spark

⁷³William S. Price, My Third Campaign in East Africa (London, 1890), p. 161.

⁷⁴Oliver and Mathew, History of East Africa, pp. 439-440.

at Pangani," says Freeman-Grenville, "travelled up and down the coast like bush fire and into the interior to include Usambara, Usagara and even the warlike Hehe of Iringa."⁷⁵ This was not simply a revolt of the Arabs anxious to recover the Sultan's authority: for the local African peoples supported the Arabs and rebels and fought alongside them to resist the imposition of European rule. The Arabs and the Africans murdered European missionaries indiscriminately; the U. M. C. A. mission escaped destruction only on the intervention of Abushiri. At Dar-es-Salaam the Lutheran missionaries were attacked and driven out; two German Benedictine Brothers and a nun were murdered.⁷⁶

The fear of the missions at Mombasa was that the Arabs on the Mombasa coast would rally together and join their brothers on the Southern coast and so form a combined effort to evict all Europeans from East Africa. The British had joined the Germans in the blockade and in doing so they increased the suspicion of the Arabs that the Europeans were united in their objective of controlling East Africa. This the missions at Mombasa had wanted to avoid, at least when things were very difficult for

⁷⁵Price, p.173.

⁷⁶Oliver and Mathew, History of East Africa, p.439.

them.⁷⁷ Most of them, however, wanted British occupation, as it would give them peace and the protection they needed against the Arabs and the African chiefs. In 1885 the C.M.S. officials in London recognised German interests in Tanganyika, as the Foreign Office had done, on the grounds that the German company would provide a permanent, fixed government there. However the Lay Secretary, Marshall Lang, emphasised that the C.M.S. was not interested in political questions.⁷⁸

Regarding the British company, the missionaries did their best to avoid becoming mixed up with its political activities. However, they secretly hailed its coming as it heralded the end of the slave trade, slavery and Islam. This attitude was a great handicap in the evangelization of the Africans, which was the main reason for the presence of the missionaries in East Africa. At that time only neutrality could save the missions from destruction by the Arabs but it was not always easy for the missionaries to adopt a neutral policy in political matters. Moreover, the Arabs did not make a distinction between the

⁷⁷Price to Lang, February 15, 1889, G3 A5/05 C.M.S. Archives, London.

⁷⁸Lang to Price, January 25, 1889, G3 A5/15, C.M.S. Archives, London.

missionaries and the agents of the company, believing that the missionaries and the company agents were allies and that they were working together to undermine the influence and power of the Arabs on the coast.

The feared uprising of the Arabs at Mombasa did not follow close upon the uprising on the Southern coast that broke out in 1888. In 1889 Hamis Khombo, a militant Arab opponent of the Europeans, and a descendant of the seven tribes at Mombasa, urged all the other coast chiefs to combine with their Arab brothers to the South to drive the Europeans into the sea. His urgings met with no response. Most of the leaders of the Arab uprising on the Southern coast had been hanged and those at Mombasa, unsure of success or even of near-unanimous support over the coast, decided to postpone the uprising to the distant future when they could be more sure of success.

The British Company, on the other hand, decided to conciliate their feelings as best they could, and followed a policy of "peaceful penetration and lavish expenditure in presents and cash"⁷⁹ which helped merely to postpone the clash since the natives on the coast regarded the company as weak. "It can-

⁷⁹ Frederick Jackson, Early Days in East Africa (London, 1930), p. 146.

not be disputed," wrote Jackson, "that it fostered the belief that the 'Kumpuni' possessed a very large stock of watches, swords, cloths, etc. and an inexhaustible supply of cash."⁸⁰

Mackenzie, the first administrator of the British Company, knew that the situation on the coast was so tense that only the reconciliation of the Arab-Swahili slave owners could pave the way for the smooth administration of the company on the coast, save the missionaries from destruction, and provide for peace that had been lacking since 1883. The company's list of investors would certainly have aggravated the feelings of the Arabs for many of them were philanthropists and ardent emancipators. Still more aggravating to them would have been the charter of the company which provided for the abolition of the slave trade and slavery.

The burning issue of the time demanding the serious attention of the Company's directors was the problem of runaway slaves. Writing on October 17, 1888 a few days after the Company had been given a charter, Euan Smith, the Consul General at Zanzibar, warned:

⁸⁰Ibid.

there is a rapidly approaching crisis in Zanzibar and in coast affairs. . . . Whether [it is] at Rabai, Fulla-doyo or Ribe is really of no consequence. The Arabs know no difference between the various denominations of missionaries. The knowledge that within easy distance of their homes there is one or more place of refuge where their runaway slaves can. . . as a matter of fact do find a safe refuge; and that those places . . . are under the protection of the British flag, and that they, the Arabs, are therefore powerless to attack them and search for their domestic slaves by force--this is sufficient to keep them in a state of irritation and hostility towards the missionaries.⁸¹

As a move toward a reconciliation with the Arabs, Mackenzie travelled all along the coast holding open-air meetings with the Arabs to hear their grievances. The Arabs immediately complained about the missionaries. William Jones wrote:

The end of the year 1888 was a trying one for our station. As soon as the Imperial British Company came to Mombasa. . . the Arabs and Swahili. . . rose as one man, to complain of their slaves who had previously and at different times taken refuge in our mission stations. They demanded. . . that the missionaries should give up all the slaves. . . come down to the coast, and all the slaves. . . should be made over to their masters after which the company would be allowed to have a footing in Mombasa.⁸²

The Company could not return the slaves to slavery again with-

⁸¹Euan Smith to Granville, October 17, 1888, F. O. 84/1909, P. R. O.

⁸²Jones to Lang, May 27, 1889, G3 A5/06, C.M.S. Archives, London.

out incurring the wrath of the British public, still actively humanitarian, and of infringing an important clause of its charter dealing with the abolition of the slave trade and of slavery. Besides, the missionaries at Mombasa would oppose the Company and organise the settlements against them. The freed slaves, many of whom Price reported "[had] been there for several years, [had] been baptised and confirmed; [had] their own houses and shambas, wives and children"⁸³ would choose to fight rather than follow their masters to slavery again. William Jones, who was an ardent champion of their freedom, chose to resist rather than to give them up. He wrote:

when Mr. Mackenzie, General Mathews and the Arabs come to pick out their slaves, I shall prove myself a useless servant; I will not and I cannot hand these poor souls to their cruel and unmerciful masters. . . .⁸⁴

The crisis did not result in an open clash. The Arabs reluctantly agreed to a compensation of £3,500 for a total of 1,400 slaves found in the mission stations.⁸⁵ While the British Company paid £1,300 the C.M.S., helped by a donation from Foxwell

⁸³Price, p. 186.

⁸⁴Price, p. 197.

⁸⁵Price to Lang, December 22, 1888, G3 A5/05, C.M.S. Archives, London.

Buxton, paid £1,200, the U. M. F. C. paid £200 and the British treasury contributed £800. This conciliated Arab feeling for a time.

The missions, on their part, agreed to refrain from receiving any more runaway slaves. The C. M. S. agreed to drive out any refugee in their mission stations who had no freedom papers, and the society agreed to allow the Arabs to enter their stations to search for their slaves.⁸⁶ The Arabs, however, did not fail to see that behind the compensation scheme lay a solid alliance between the missions and the Company. They believed that the power and wealth of the Company was behind the missionaries and their teaching.

Missionary Work and Expansion 1874-1892

The Church Missionary Society and the United Methodist Free Church were able to begin work among the coastal tribes only in the 1880's. The political problems created by their presence, especially that of the C. M. S. freed slave settlement in the midst of a predominantly Muslim area, made it impossible for them to expand into the interior immediately after 1873. The missionaries had also to explore the surrounding area and to es-

⁸⁶Kirsop, p. 101.

establish workable relations with the African tribes before they could begin direct evangelical work among the Africans. Therefore the missionaries began to survey sites and to travel among the Nyika as a first step towards expansion into the interior. Harry Binns made frequent visits into the Nyikac country, as did James Lamb (1874-1876), J. W. Handford (1875-1886), William Jones (1874-1904), and George David (1874-1884).⁸⁷

From their base at Ribe mission, established in 1862, Thomas Wakefield and Charles New, the U.M.F.C. pioneer missionaries to Kenya, made frequent journeys to Kilimanjaro and Usambara.⁸⁸ After 1875, however, they directed their efforts to the Tana River region. From about 1870 the missionaries of the two societies branched out in different directions; those of the C.M.S. toward the Great Lakes and Kilimanjaro, and those of the U.M.F.C. toward the Tana River region, the home of the Galla and Pokomo. In 1871 Charles New had recommended to his mission that it begin work among the Chagga after he had visited Mandara, the chief of the Chagga at Moshi. But the Foreign Mission Committee of the U.M.F.C. shelved it in

⁸⁷C.M.S. Proceedings, 1880/82, pp. 29-30.

⁸⁸Wakefield, 39, pp. 110-115.

1874 because of the difficulties Charles New encountered with the chief who, it was reported, handled him roughly and took most of his possessions, for which actions the Foreign Mission Committee protested to the Sultan of Zanzibar, but in vain.⁸⁹ About the same time they shelved the initial work at the court of the friendly chief, Kimweri of Usambara, even though the Committee was in favour of such work.

But the U. M. F. C. desired more to work among the Galla; this they felt to be a moral obligation laid on them by Ludwig Krapf, which caused them to neglect more likely areas like the Usambara, where the U. M. C. A. came to have brilliant success with the Shambala and the Bondei of Tanganyika. Thomas Wakefield, the U. M. F. C. pioneer missionary, considered the beginning of work among the Galla a necessary obligation of his mission, and directed all his efforts toward that goal. Joseph Kirsop, the biographer of the Reverend Robert Moss Ormeroid, for many years in charge of Golbanti mission, said that the U. M. F. C. established themselves at Ribe not primarily to work among

⁸⁹The Foreign Missionary Committee (United Methodist Free Church) Minute Book I, p. 381. (Hereafter referred to as F. M. C. [U. M. F. C.] Minute Book.)

the Wanyika but as a stepping stone to the Galla.⁹⁰ This was the reason why Wakefield and New spent so much time and effort exploring the area between 1862 and 1884. The lack of success at Ribe which Wakefield lamented in 1872; after ten years of residence there, was, he believed, due to the scanty and scattered Nyika population. This, however, did not divert his efforts nor those of the Foreign Mission Committee from the mission to the Galla which was set up in 1878.

The Foreign Mission Committee responded cheerfully to Wakefield's report that the Galla were willing to have the mission established. The Committee resolved,

. . . [that] in the judgment of this Committee the labours of our missionaries in East Africa should be confined to the Galla country and that for the present no attempt should be made to commence a mission at Chagga.⁹¹

In 1884 Wakefield established a mission station on the River Tana at Golbanti which was within easy reach of Lamu, a prosperous coastal harbour on the Indian Ocean, serving the Northern coast. Golbanti became henceforth the center of U. M. F. C. work in the area for the evangelization of the Galla and also the Wapokomo

⁹⁰Kirsop, p. 33.

⁹¹F. M. C. (U. M. F. C.) Minute Book I, p. 393.

whom Wakefield estimated to number about 14,000. Here Wakefield acquired about 6,000 acres of land, mainly belonging to the Wapokomo who were living on the banks of the River Tana.

The C. M. S. established its first mission station out of Freretown and Rabai at Teita on the Ndara hills in 1882.⁹² Harry Binns had visited Teita in 1880 and had recommended the establishment of a mission here as a stepping-stone to Ukambani and southward to Chagga and Upare. Further away into the Kilimanjaro mountain, which Binns believed was the next step from Teita, Mandara, the chief of the Moshi, also known as Rindi, had written to Captain Russell, the C. M. S. Superintendent at Freretown in 1875 inviting the C. M. S. to start work in his country.⁹³ As we shall discover, Mandara did not wish to become a Christian.

C. M. S. missionaries were so preoccupied with Freretown affairs and with the shortage of men and finances that they shelved Mandara's invitation. Ten years later, in 1885, James Hannington, the first Bishop of East Equatorial Africa, visited Mandara and was much impressed with him. "With the exception of Mirambo," he wrote, "I never met in the interior a shrewder or

⁹²Stock, II, p.135 and III, p.266.

⁹³Mandara to Captain Russell, 4th after Ramadan (sic), C A5/MI-5, C. M. S. Archives, London.

more enlightened chief."⁹⁴ Hannington had not seen Mutesa, King of Buganda. Harry Johnston was at Mandara's court the previous year but his behaviour towards Mandara, about which Mandara protested to Hannington, demanding recompense, left much to be desired.⁹⁵ Such behaviour certainly did not present a good picture of Europeans before Mandara and his elders.

To be sure the British Consul at Zanzibar, Sir John Kirk, urged the C.M.S. to occupy Moshi and establish British influence at Kilimanjaro in order to set a prior claim for the British there. Bishop Hannington cooperated with Kirk in all the plans for the British occupation of Moshi, thereby illustrating the willingness of the mission and the consul to cooperate in the acquisition of territory in East Africa.⁹⁶ Captain Mathews was to go to Moshi, on behalf of the Sultan and the British Consul, to obtain treaties from him and from other tribes on the mountain to forestall the Germans. Another example of the cooperation between the British and the missionaries came to light: Mathews consulted with

⁹⁴Hannington to Wingram, April 21, 1885, G3 A5/02, C.M.S. Archives, London.

⁹⁵Hannington to Wingram, March 20, 1885, G3 A5/02, C.M.S. Archives, London.

⁹⁶Hannington to Wingram, February 14, 1885, G3 A5/02, C.M.S. Archives, London.

the bishop before he set out for Kilimanjaro in the spring. Immediately after his return with the Moshi treaties, purported to have been signed by Mandara, Hannington hastily sanctioned the occupation of the Moshi by the C.M.S. despite the knowledge that the Germans also had signed treaties with Mandara twelve days after Mathews had signed his.⁹⁷ Fitch and Wray arrived at the court of Mandara in July, 1885, and found the Zanzibar flag flying there. Kirk participated in the plans fully but the arrival of the two C.M.S. missionaries was not immediately followed by activity in Mission work for this was not what Mandara had invited them to do.

The position of Mandara in this struggle by the European powers to take over his country and, ultimately, the whole of Kilimanjaro, is significant. From the beginning to the end it was clear that he wanted them for his own advantage. He was, therefore, able to play them off one against the other, and often got what he wanted. Wray, in reporting a conversation with him, wrote that Mandara said, "The Sultan of Zanzibar wants my country, the Germans want my country, you want my country. Who-

⁹⁷Hannington to Wingram, February 14, 1885, G3 A5/02, C.M.S. Archives, London.

ever wants my country must pay for it."⁹⁸

By 1885, on the eve of the scramble for Africa that subsequently led to the partition of East Africa by Europeans without the advice or desire of the Africans, the missions had not ventured into the Masailand on their way to Uganda. This was a shorter and more direct route than the long and unhealthy one across central Tanganyika used by travellers and missionaries for many years past. The Masai who had ravaged much of this area held the corridor to the interior: they had lived on cattle plundering for much of their lives and by the mid-century they had established an unchallenged authority across the Kenya plateau as far as the corridor to the interior, on the coast, and southwards to central Tanganyika. They had driven the Kikuyu into the forest hills and the foothills of the highlands, the Nyika into the coastal plains where they were very vulnerable to their incessant raids, and the Chagga into the foothills of Mount Kilimanjaro. The Masai empire and kingdom, however, was mainly a cattle kingdom and far from being imperialistic.

Hitherto the Zanzibari traders had not dared go into their for "to go into the Masailand," wrote Dawson, "is, in the opinion

⁹⁸Wray to Lang, September 19, 1885, G3 A5/02, C.M.S. Archives, London.

of the Zanzibaris, like going into a sort of inferno."⁹⁹ In 1878 William Jones, on his itinerating tour to the Duruma, a section of the Nyika, witnessed much of the destruction the Masai had done to the Nyika country. He branded them "a common foe" and in a language characteristic of the white missionaries, said, "all East Africa [needs] a mighty deliverer from the Masai."¹⁰⁰ In African eyes, however, the fear of the Masai was better for Kenya.

In 1885 Hannington put forward to Salisbury Square the case for the Masai route.¹⁰¹ He believed that once the Masai fear was overcome the route would be much shorter and more convenient. Besides this he maintained that the opening of the route would open opportunities of employment to the C.M.S. Christians and they could produce a well-trained staff of responsible headmen. The same year James Hannington was the first C.M.S. missionary in charge of the party that ventured across the Masai route to Uganda. However he was murdered at Bungoma on Mwanga's

⁹⁹Dawson, p.381.

¹⁰⁰William Jones, "Journey to Duruma," August 7, 1878, C A5/014, C.M.S. Archives, London.

¹⁰¹Hannington to Wingram, April 21, 1885, G3 A5/02, C.M.S. Archives, London.

instructions. His death, though tragic, reflects more the power of the African chiefs and elders in East Africa, and their desire to defend their country from the attack of outside powers than their barbarism and bloodthirstiness. The story of European missionary activities during this pioneer period reflects spectacularly this power; it also clearly demonstrates the utter helplessness of the missionaries before the African, even though they were later to pose as superior human beings under the strong arm of the imperial power that was invading East Africa at the same time. Almost all the European travellers to East Africa in the nineteenth century wrote about and complained of the barbarism of the Africans. For such travellers and writers the missionaries were a civilising agent and, indeed, they were so in many ways. Both the writers and the missionaries themselves condemned the frustration they suffered at the hands of the Africans whom they had come to civilise and redeem from savagery and heathenism, and hastily labeled any opposition from the Africans uncalled for and, at best, savagery. A close examination of the period reveals beyond doubt that the missionaries were able to survive only because the Africans were kind.

As on the coast, so it was in Kenya, that the first threat to the work of the missions came from the Arab and Swahili

slave traders. The Swahili-Arab slave dealers, who dealt mainly with the Nyika and the Akamba, were quick to discover that the entry of the missionaries into the area, hitherto their trading monopoly, would undercut their trade and their influence among the Africans. In 1879 Harry Binns, on his journey to Teita, discovered that the Swahili-Arab slave dealers had told the Teita all sorts of stories about the missionaries and had bribed them to keep the missionaries out of their country: "[they] gave the people at the top of the mountain a present of cloth on condition that they would not allow us to come to their village."¹⁰² The Akamba, for long agents of slavers and ivory traders from the coast, associated the missionaries with the Arab-Swahili traders; "at Marangua, a Kamba village, Binns was asked by the Akamba if he had come to buy slaves, cattle, ivory. . . ."¹⁰³ Swahili traders established at Jomvu mainly in order to trade with the Nyika and to supply the coast with slaves and ivory, closed the road between Freretown and Rabai in 1883 in an attempt to cut communication between the two mission stations

¹⁰²Binns to Wright, September 9, 1878, C A5/MI-6, C.M.S. Archives, London.

¹⁰³Ibid.

and to force them out.¹⁰⁴ Further inland at Moshi, Arab-Swahili traders, who were already established at Mandara's court in the early seventies, persuaded Mandara to cut the C.M.S. out of his country in 1886.¹⁰⁵ It was an Arab hand, for example, that had written Mandara's letter to Captain Russell in 1875. And the runner-trader by the name of Said, certainly an Arab or Swahili, seems to have been reputable in the eyes of Mandara.¹⁰⁶

During this pioneer period the missionaries to Kenya found that the power of the chiefs and elders with whom they had to deal was very real and great. The coastal tribes, or those immediate to it, had no centralized tribal authorities but each tribe was divided into small independent administrative units either of the same families or, as in the case of the Nyika, the kaya--the kaya had grown up as a stockade where the Nyika lived together for defence against the Masai and Somali, but in essence it became an administrative unit, each one being quite different and independent from the other. The Nyika then were formed into nine kayas, and each was under a council of elders. Here on the

¹⁰⁴Wakefield, p.179.

¹⁰⁵Church Missionary Intelligencer, 1885, pp. 515-516.

¹⁰⁶C.M.S. Proceedings, 1886, pp.39-40.

coast the missionaries were disappointed and frustrated by the diverse and numerous tribal authorities with whom they had to negotiate and above all to whom they had to pay taxes.

The African chief, or elders, charged the missionaries fees for permission to enter and reside among his people, or as transit fee to the next village. In 1865, on his first journey to Galla, Thomas Wakefield "secured beads, brass, and iron wire, coloured cloth, grey and indigo-dyed calico, lemani (a coarse cloth) as presents to the chief and influential men."¹⁰⁷ These were the currency of the Galla and Wakefield had to pay them to the Galla elders in order to get permission to travel about the country or to stay there. The Africans knew that their country was a high premium to the coming Europeans and so they demanded high fees. This varied from place to place; the Africans and the missionaries often bargained. In the early days it was the numerous tribal authorities to whom the missionaries had to pay satisfactory tax that caused them the frustrations. Their meager provisions were often insufficient for the elders on the coast. The missionaries therefore complained that the elders were the cause of their impoverishment: "Big men and little men," wrote Wakefield, "demanded their ada of

¹⁰⁷Wakefield, p. 47.

of cloth until the missionaries were impoverished."¹⁰⁸

As the missionaries and European travellers journeyed more frequently across the country (this was especially so during the 1880's) the Africans rightly interpreted it as a great demand for their country and consequently began to demand more from the foreigners. In Kenya, the coast and interior, most of the Africans, and especially the elders whose duty it was to defend the people, were less aware than Mwanga that the missionaries were preparing a way for the occupation of their country by their fellow Europeans. The Arabs on the coast, however, had quickly discovered the alliance that was later to emerge between the missionaries and the imperialists of the British Company yet to be formed.

The main concern of the Africans for the time being was, therefore, to gain financially from the newcomers. The equipment and provisions of the pioneer missionaries undoubtedly encouraged the Africans to believe that the missionaries were rich and that they could therefore pay more in goods than previously. Thomas Wakefield's equipment on his journey to the Galla has already been cited. He was far from being poorly equipped. In 1885 Hannington carried with him a miscellaneous assortment

¹⁰⁸Ibid., p. 58.

of articles more or less bulky with which to purchase food, pay tribute, hire extra assistance and porters."¹⁰⁹ Most missionaries were thus abundantly equipped; they also carried guns, had means to employ runners and, above all, their caravans numbered hundreds of men as well-equipped as any invading army.

The rise in what, today, we would call taxation and toll but which the missionaries wrongly called hongo (bribery) caused the missionaries great alarm and anxiety. Hannington expressed the fear that he did not carry enough to pay the Teita, Akamba, the Kikuyu and the Nandi on the way to Uganda through Kenya. There had been many instances where missionaries were refused permission to proceed with their journey unless they had paid what the Africans taxed them. As early as 1871 Wakefield was forced to cut short his journey to the Galla at Kauma kaya because he would not pay \$100 which the elders demanded.¹¹⁰ At Ukambani in 1885 Hannington was not allowed to proceed with his journey until he had paid the elders and fed the people where famine had just struck the country.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹Dawson, p. 207.

¹¹⁰Wakefield, p. 53.

¹¹¹Jones to Lang, Diary of Events, August 18, 1885, G3 A5/02, C. M. S. Archives, London.

The problems the missionaries faced, once they were established at the court of Mandara, and at Teita, is characteristic of the whole situation in this period. The missionaries were single-handed and depended upon the chief or the elders for their safety, food and accommodation. If anything went wrong they could seek redress only from the chief or elders of the village. They came to Moshi or to Teita, for example, to spread the peaceful message of God to the Africans. The Africans understood, and interpreted their coming, differently. The Gallas, for example, believed that they had come to protect them from the incursions of the Masai, and the missionaries were permitted to stay there only on condition that they promised to do so.¹¹²

Mandara in particular wanted the missionaries for political reasons; he has been described as one of the greatest African diplomats of the time.¹¹³ Mangi Mandara's greatest adversary at Kilimanjaro during his long reign, from 1870 to 1891,

¹¹²Wakefield, p. 55.

¹¹³Cathleen Stahl, History of the Chagga People of Kilimanjaro (London, 1964), pp. 249-250.

was Mangi Sina of Kobosho, another kingdom on the mountain west of Moshi.¹¹⁴ Mandara therefore widened his horizons and looked outside the mountain for an alliance to enhance his power. He made an alliance with the Warusha, the greatest military power outside Kilimanjaro. The Warusha had conquered Machame and Moshi in the nineteenth century, and Mandara rightly believed that an alliance with them would add to his prestige. Once Mandara won this alliance he was able to engage in campaigns against the eastern kingdoms on the mountain. Next to the Warusha, he established relations with the Swahili, primarily a trading link, but one that brought him into alliance with the Sultan of Zanzibar from whom he obtained guns and cloth. The third was alliance with Europeans. The fact that he was able to bluff and to play one against the other is in itself proof of a very adroit diplomatic move.

In 1885 Mandara allowed the C. M. S. to establish a mission station at Moshi.¹¹⁵ At the same time he concluded a political treaty with von Juhlke, representing the Germans, and it would

¹¹⁴Stahl, p. 245.

¹¹⁵Hannington to Gentlement [sic], May 8, 1885, G3 M5/02, C. M. S. Archives, London.

thus appear that he had obtained the support of the two European powers concerned in the situation.

The fortunes of the C.M.S. became precarious as soon as Mandara discovered that the missionaries could not supply him with the arms he needed or the political prestige that he associated with their presence at Moshi. In 1885 Mandara is reported to have told Hannington that he wanted guns and gunpowder and that only when he could not get them would he want a white teacher, presumably for prestige purposes. The Church Missionary Intelligencer reported in 1885 that

[Mandara had] plainly said he [wanted] guns and artificers and European appliances. He [did] not want Christian teaching any more than Mutesa required it.¹¹⁶

In 1886 he closed the market where the missionaries obtained their food for five days,¹¹⁷ presumably because they had not given him the guns or he had not gained from them politically. The Swahili at his court had become substantial in number and they were persuading him to cut off the C.M.S. The interests of the Swahili and Mandara were the same since both were interested in the slave trade to which the C.M.S. were bitterly

¹¹⁶Dawson, p. 345.

¹¹⁷Church Missionary Intelligencer, p. 515.

opposed. Fitch wrote:

The slave trade seems to be reviving in these parts, a band of Swahili dealers have been camped at Mnoray. Mandara obtains his slaves from Ugwenno. To our arguments against it he pays no attention; to him the Swahili argument is better for it is backed by gunpowder and calico.¹¹⁸

It was no wonder then that up to 1887 he had not allowed them to enroll any children in the school or shown any positive sign of his favor. There was, however, a change in Mandara's attitude about this time. He expressed the wish to learn the Book but more important for the C.M.S. was that he allowed them to enroll children in the school. But this was also the time when the German East Africa Company established a station at Moshi, in August, 1887, and Mandara was perhaps interested in playing off the C.M.S. against the German Company.

At Teita the C.M.S. missionaries, J. A. Wray and W. Morris, suffered at the hands of the Teita elders, the same as those at the court of Mandara. Up to 1885 Wray, who had been here since the Teita mission was founded in 1882, had not succeeded in persuading the Teita to come to church or to allow their children to enroll in the school. The opposition of the Teita elders to the mission had been growing constantly. In 1885 and 1887

¹¹⁸Fitch to Lang, January 2, 1886, G3 A5/04, C.M.S. Archives, London.

famine broke out all over the Nyika and this was their pretext for driving the missionaries out of their country. It was all right for the missionaries to stay as long as everything progressed well at Teita. In spite of the fact that Wray had organized food for them, their opposition to the missionaries reached fever pitch in 1887. The Teita used the famine as a pretext to attack the missionaries. Bishop Henry Parker had hoped that the Teita would look upon Wray as their friend because of the famine relief he had organised.¹¹⁹ But this was not the case. The Teita openly accused the C.M.S. of bringing about the famine and began to attack them in an attempt to evict them from Teita. Morris reported that the Teita had made two surprise attacks on him and Wray in 1887 and "then for some months," he wrote, "affairs continued in a very unsettled state owing to the absence of rain; for which we were blamed and threatened with another attack. . . ."¹²⁰

Wray and Morris were very disappointed with the attitude of the Teita. They had organised famine relief, not because they felt responsible for the famine, as the Teita supposed,

¹¹⁹Parker to Stock, March 3, 1887, G3 A5/04, C.M.S. Archives, London.

¹²⁰Extracts, Annual Letters (C.M.S.), 1888-1889, pp.18-19.

but because, as missionaries, they felt it their duty to rescue the tribe from starvation. In return they expected the Teita to adopt an opposite attitude towards them and to attend church services. It was no wonder that Wray was disappointed when the Teita became more hostile to him. He wrote:

I have seen a good deal of hypocrisy among these [Teita] people but never any to equal that of today. Those very men who call themselves my friends were among my enemies. Others whom we had fed and protected at Rabai were among them and this is how they return kindness.¹²¹

What Wray said was typical of the attitude of most of the missionaries towards the Africans who did not readily respond to the new teaching of the missionaries. Had the missionaries been in a position to force the Africans to submit to them rather than the missionaries to the Africans, as was the case, they would have certainly done so. But the missionaries were living in the country of the Africans; their stay in the midst of them was an act of generosity on the part of the Africans. They were at cross-purposes about what each expected from the other. The missionaries wanted the Africans to become Christians; the African chiefs or elders, however, saw the missionaries as allies, and the rest of the Africans were only attracted to them because of their material wealth.

¹²¹Wray to Lang, November 10, 1887, G3 A5/04, C. M. S. Archives, London.

CHAPTER II

CHANGED SITUATIONS, PROBLEMS AND ABOLITION OF SLAVERY

1890-1907

In 1890 there was a dramatic change in the affairs of East Africa. That year the Anglo-German treaty between Britain and Germany was signed in Berlin on the first of July.¹ The two powers agreed upon a division of territory in East Africa. In 1886 they had defined their spheres of influence in East Africa from the Indian Ocean to the eastern edge of Lake Victoria. In 1890 the partition of East Africa, begun in 1886, was completed; the boundary line drawn from Vanga to east of Lake Victoria was extended westward across the Lake to place Uganda under the British influence. Under the same agreement Germany recognised a British protectorate over Zanzibar in exchange for Heligoland.

This was to be the first time that the Africans were to yield their power and authority to foreign powers from outside East Africa. The Sultan of Zanzibar did not hold authority over

¹ Roland Oliver and Gervase Mathew (eds.), History of East Africa, Vol. I (Oxford, 1963), pp. 382-385; map p. 374.

the tribes in the interior--that is, the Masai, the Akamba, the Nyika, the Galla, the Somali, the Kikuyu, the Chagga and the Pokomo.² The Masai, it is true, had been all-powerful in the interior from the midcentury and had raided, almost freely, as far as down the coast to Mombasa itself. However, once they had driven the other tribes into less vulnerable areas they left them alone. The raids apart, the Masai were not interested in dominating or establishing an empire over the other tribes for their raids were primarily for cattle. So the tribes were independent in their respective areas.

On the coast the Sultan's flag certainly flew, but the coast towns were independent.³ The flag was therefore more the sign of relationship with foreign powers than an indication of the power of the Sultan over the Arabs on the coast. The Mazrui family at Mombasa, for example, had not accepted the Sultan's sovereignty even after he had partially defeated them in 1837. Seyyid Khalifa succeeded in preventing Mbaruk bin Rashidi, the Mazrui leader at Mombasa, from leading a revolt of the Mombasa Arabs

²Frere to Granville, March 10, 1873 and April 5, 1873, F.O. 84/1390 and F.O. 84/1390, P.R.O.

³Reginald Coupland. The Exploitation of East Africa 1856-1900: The Slave Trade and the Scramble (London, 1939), pp. 251-252.

against him only by paying an annual subsidy.⁴

The first real threat to the power and influence of the Arabs at Mombasa, therefore, came from the British East Africa Company, which was chartered in 1888 to exploit the economic resources of the area, and which was to rule and administer the British sphere of influence.⁵ The Company established its base and headquarters at Mombasa which was also the center of the Mazuri families on the northern coast. The primary motive of the British Company in East Africa was, of course, economic.⁶ For the Company to attain its goal it was necessary that they should compromise the political climate on the coast already made explosive by the presence of the missionaries. Moreover the events on the southern coast, where the Arabs had taken up arms in 1888-1889 to resist the German Company, made the British Company adopt a reconciliatory policy to avoid provoking the Arabs on the northern coast into a rebellion against the Company. The British Company, therefore, decided to interfere as little as possible with the affairs of the Arabs in their administration, laws and customs. For the

⁴Hardinge to Lord Salisbury, April 12, 1896, F. O. 107/51.

⁵Oliver and Mathew, History of East Africa, pp. 378-381.

⁶Ibid., p. 386.

whole period of the Company's rule on the coast, 1888-1895, the coastal towns were independent and the administration of the towns was in the hands of the Walis and the Sheikhs.⁷ By 1890 the Company had stationed representatives in all the big towns at the coast; at Vanga, Malindi, Lamu, and up on the Tana River. But their main duty was the collection of customs. In 1895 Arthur Hardinge found that the Arab chiefs at Gazi and Takaungu had never been affected by the presence of the representative of the British Company. He wrote,

the District Superintendent at Vanga and Malindi paid short visits to Mbaruk of Gazi and Salim of Rakaungu but they found it necessary to ignore or affect not to be aware of the offences of both chiefs against the laws such as the slave dealings of the one and the imposition of taxes on British Indian subjects by the other.⁸

This policy, however, proved a great handicap to the work of the missions and almost crippled their work between 1888 and 1890. In 1888 the Company had compensated the Arabs for the loss of their slaves to the missions in order to keep them from rising up against the missions and the Europeans, which would have undermined the success of the Company in its infancy. The

⁷Hardinge to Lord Salisbury, April 12, 1896, F. O. 107/51, P. R. O.

⁸Ibid.

Director of the Company, William Mackenzie, forced the missions to agree not to receive any more runaway slaves.⁹ Almost immediately he discouraged the missions from doing gospel work on the coast and in 1899, when there were rumours that the missionaries were still giving refuge to runaway slaves, Mackenzie told the missionaries on the coast that they should either respect the laws of the country they had come to live in or "if the same [were] distasteful to anyone coming [to the coast] the proper alternative is to go elsewhere and not jeopardise the good fellowship and possibly the lives of their fellow countrymen resident here."¹⁰ The problem, of course, was slavery, which was allowed to exist by the laws of the Arabs on the coast.

The Anglo-German treaty of 1890, however, brought a change. After 1890 the missionaries on the coast began to adopt a more militant policy towards the coast. With Zanzibar becoming a British protectorate that year, it is possible that the missionaries began to foresee that the political power and influence

⁹Euan Smith to Lord Salisbury, January 11, 1889, F. O. 84/1975, P. R. O.

¹⁰William Mackenzie, "Circular Letter to all Mission Stations," January 5, 1889, in Euan Smith to Lord Salisbury, January 11, 1889, F. O. 84/1975, P. R. O.

of the Sultan of Zanzibar and of the Arabs on the Mombasa coast would wane. In 1890 European powers with interests in Africa, together with the United States and Turkey, had signed the Brussels Act in which they had, among other things, committed themselves to the abolition of slavery in Africa. This made the missionaries at Mombasa more confident that the British government would back them in their campaign to root out this evil from the coast and to win the coastal population for Christ.

It was not until after 1890 that the C. M. S. began evangelical work among the Muslim population at Mombasa. In 1893 the C. M. S. invaded the town.¹¹ That year three ladies were sent from England especially to preach among the Muslim women of the town, as this, the C. M. S. believed, was the best way of converting the Muslim population to Christianity. The ladies established themselves at Ndia Kuu, then the main street of Mombasa.¹² About the same time W. E. Taylor, a medical missionary, established his residence close by. Taylor ran a small dispensary in which those who came for treatment had to listen

¹¹Church Missionary Intelligencer, 1893, p. 3.

¹²C. W. Hobley, Kenya from Chartered Company to Crown Colony (London, 1905), pp. 32-33.

to a gospel lesson before being treated. He reported that the main work of the lady missionaries "consisted in personal dealing gained by visiting from house to house and in public preaching of the gospel and hymn singing."¹³ Arthur Hardinge who was most opposed to direct evangelical work on so predominantly a Muslim coast said,

the ladies of the mission partitioned the town into districts which they worked on the methods but with far more the zeal of the lady district visitor in an English parish.¹⁴

Some of the C. M. S. missionaries and catechists at Freretown began to make frequent visits to Mombasa to hold services in the main market of the town and in open places where the Arabs or Swahili were likely to gather. The campaign of the C. M. S. to win over Muslims at Mombasa reached its peak with the opening of a mission hall there by Alfred Tucker, the third Bishop of the C. M. S. East African Mission in 1896. Tucker said that the mission hall was built as a means of reaching the Mohammedan population ". . . and [as a means of carrying] on educational work among the Mohammedan children (our main object being to win

¹³ Church Missionary Intelligencer, 1893, p. 3.

¹⁴ Hardinge to Lord Salisbury, April 12, 1896, F. O. 107/51, P. R. O.

them for Christ)."¹⁵

The Arabs at Mombasa were very disappointed with the missionaries for preaching against Islam. They believed that the missionaries were able to do so only because the British government was behind them. In 1896 Arthur Hardinge, the Commissioner for the East Africa Protectorate, said that as many of the Arabs passed through the market and heard the open-air preaching of the missionaries they [the Arabs], felt that but for their English rulers these priests would not dare to declaim in the public streets against the doctrines of their religion.¹⁶

Anti-European feelings among the Arab population increased with the invasion of the city by the C. M. S. By 1895 it had become so intense that a clash was soon to occur. That year the administration of the coast and the area between it and east of Lake Victoria, Uganda, passed from Company rule to British rule and became known as the East African Protectorate. The Arabs all over the coast believed that this change would be followed immediately by the abolition of slavery. This particularly alarmed them since their hopes that the coastal strip, hitherto leased

¹⁵ Alfred Tucker, Eighteen Years in Uganda and East Africa, 2nd ed. (London, 1911), Vol. II, p. 62.

¹⁶ Hardinge to Lord Salisbury, April 12, 1896, F. O. 107/51, P. R. O.

to the Company by the Sultan, would revert to him or to the Arabs of the coast were dashed to the ground when the coast and mainland became a British protectorate in 1895. Hence there was anxiety on the coast and this gave the Arabs cause for rebellion.

The affairs of the missions too began to take a different turn. The change of authority from African to Company rule meant a change of relationship between the missionaries and the African authorities. For one thing, it was no longer necessary for the missionaries to submit to the wishes of the African King, chief, or elders. Nor did the changed conditions, especially after 1895, permit the chief to extract from the missions as much taxation as they wanted for the missionaries could now refuse and go unmolested. A typical example of the change of attitude by the missionaries towards the African chiefs, kings and elders is spectacularly revealed in what Alfred Tucker, third Bishop of East Equatorial Africa Mission, wrote only eight days after the Anglo-German treaty was signed. He wrote:

We are going forth on our long journey (to Buganda) neither depending upon nor trusting in the arm of the flesh, nor courting the patronage of the world, much less that of an African potentate.¹⁷

¹⁷ Alfred Tucker to Lang, June 11, 1890, G3 A5/06, C.M.S. Archives, London.

Far away in the interior, at Moshi, the affairs of the C.M.S., already established at the court of Mandara since 1884, changed with the passing of the country into the hands of the German East Africa Company (1885 to 1890)¹⁸ and the German imperial rule (1891 to 1919).¹⁹ With a promise of protection from the German government, the C.M.S. decided to stay at Moshi.

Reports on the affairs of Moshi from the C.M.S. from 1888 through 1890 show the German hold on the mountain to have been precariously thin. Albert Steggal and E. A. Fitch, C.M.S. missionaries at Moshi, reported widespread hostility from Chagga chiefs against the Germans.²⁰ In 1890 Steggal reported that a German party that had hoisted a German flag at Machame, a Chagga chiefdom west of Moshi, had been captured by Sina of Kibosho and had been shut in for two days without food.²¹ Sina attacked Machame and pulled down and burned the German flag.²²

¹⁸ Mary Evelyn Townsend, The Rise and Fall of Germany's Colonial Empire 1884-1919 (New York, 1930), pp. 131-141.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Taylor to Price, August 17, 1888, G3 A5/05, C.M.S. Archives, London.

²¹ Steggal to Keith Anstruther, September 23, 1890, in Euan Smith to Lord Salisbury, November 24, 1890, F.O. 84/2066, P.R.O.

²² Ibid.

Neither the Germans nor the C. M. S. seemed to make headway with Mandara, and in 1888 the German agent at Moshi had planned to move from Moshi to a friendlier center which would be more attractive to German colonists. The German agent had invited the C. M. S. to move with him but the plans did not materialize because of the hostilities against the Germans that broke out on the coast.²³ It was not until after 1890 that Germany gained a proper footing on the mountain. Hitherto the German East Africa Company was engaged in suppressing the uprising against them on the coast. By 1891 von Wissmann had completed subjugating the coast, from whence he moved to Kilimanjaro, the next area of resistance where Mangi Sina of Kibosho, the most powerful chief here, had never accepted German Company rule. In 1891 Sina was conquered and forced to sign a treaty.²⁴

With the defeat of Sina of Kibosho in 1891 the Germans adopted a firmer policy towards the Chagga and began to suppress them with a cruelty that offended the missionaries of the C. M. S., who were soon writing home of the cruelty of the Ger-

²³ William S. Price, My Third Campaign in East Africa (London, 1890), pp. 140-141.

²⁴ Cathleen Stahl, History of the Chagga People of Kilimanjaro (London, 1964), p. 255.

mans in a way that offended the German officials at Moshi. Beside this the C.M.S. missionaries began to sympathise with the Chagga at Moshi. Mandara had died in 1891 and Meli, one of his sons, succeeded him.²⁵

About the same time there was a change of German administrators on the mountain. Carl Peters arrived to take over the German station at Moshi towards the latter part of 1891 and decided to move his capital from Moshi to Marangu. About this move Peters wrote to Baxter (C.M.S. medical missionary at Moshi):

the news I hear from time to time of young Meli . . . are not at all pleasant. I beg to inform you that I shall propose to the German Government to crush these people by war. I tomorrow withdraw [] our outpost from Moshi instead of which I shall have a stronger outpost on a firm base, and I shall ask the Government to send me about 150 soldiers in order to finish this young fellow.²⁶

Albert Steggall, with over two years of residence at Moshi, told Peters that the Chagga at Moshi "were subject to [his] Government : and [they did not entertain any] avid

²⁵ Church Missionary Intelligencer, 1893, p. 248.

²⁶ Carl Peters to Baxter, January 24, 1892, in Portal to the Marquis of Salisbury, June 12, 1892, F.O. 84/2231, P.R.O.

designs against the [German Government]."²⁷ The C.M.S. felt that the military expedition against the Chagga at Moshi was uncalled for and that Peters had been misinformed as to the real attitude of the Moshi people.²⁸

The move from Moshi to Marangu was certainly more than the mere transference of a capital. For Chief Meli of Moshi this change meant a loss of influence with the Germans to the weaker and more envious Mangi Marealle of Marangu, whom he had plans to invade in the very near future. Petro Marealle, ex-area chief and a grandson of Marealle, told the author that his grandfather formed an alliance with Carl Peters to avert the destruction of his kingdom by Meli.²⁹ The alliance between Marealle and Carl Peters became complete with the establishment of the German capital at Marangu for the Kilimanjaro area.

The C.M.S. missionaries, who had hitherto remained on good terms with the Germans and who had perhaps been serving

²⁷Albert Steggal to Carl Peters, January 26, 1892, in Portal to the Marquis of Salisbury, June 12, 1892, F. O. 84/2231, P.R.O.

²⁸Tucker to Portal, February 18, 1892, in Portal to the Marquis of Salisbury, June 12, 1892, F. O. 84/2231, P. R. O.

²⁹Interview with Petro I. Marealle, February 2 & 4, 1966.

as intermediaries between the Germans and the chief if not also exercising a restraining hand on both sides, lost this role. It is possible that with the loss of their German friends the C.M.S. missionaries naturally threw their whole weight on the side of the one authority remaining at Moshi, Chief Meli, on whom they still depended for their safety, food, and above all, for the success of their mission work among the Chagga at Moshi. This alienated them from Peters. In 1887 relations between them and Mandara had improved and success in their work was made easier when he agreed to support them, for five years, from 1887.³⁰

It is possible that at Marangu Brother Blanchad, a Roman Catholic from Germany, had influence on Marealle. And in 1891 he might also have tried to influence Peters when the German capital was established at Marangu. But it is unlikely that the conflict between the Germans and C.M.S. that ensued, in 1892, was prompted by a Protestant-Roman Catholic struggle for power. More probably it was a continuation of the early struggles between the British and the Germans to exclude one another from East Africa. For one thing, Carl Peters certainly

³⁰Fitch to Lang, January 28, 1888, G3 A5/05, C.M.S. Archives, London.

did not need the Roman Catholic influence to dislike the British or the C. M. S. and their influence on the mountain. The activities of the Germans in East Africa from 1884 amply show that he had no intention of allowing British interests to remain supreme in East Africa.³¹ Naturally Peters would have cause to want the C. M. S. to move from the German sphere of action and especially so since they had actively protested and reported about his ruthless actions towards the Chagga at Marangu. The presence of the C. M. S. at Moshi away from the close eye of the administrator at Marangu could not, therefore, place the C. M. S. missionaries in an enviable position. Peters wanted to crush the Chaggas who he rightly believed would not accept German rule without force of arms. By 1892, when Peters left Kilimanjaro to serve on a border survey mission, the two sides were in a state of war and the missionaries were already fearful that there would soon be murder and chaos on the mountain.³² But before he left Peters had already accused Baxter of helping Meli to secure arms from Mombasa through Taveta,

³¹Townsend, p. 136.

³²Steggall to Peters, January 26, 1892, G3 A5/08, C. M. S. Archives, London.

apparently from the evidence he got when he intercepted some of his letters. The replacement of Peters by von Bülow in 1892 did not improve the situation of the C.M.S. at Moshi for von Bülow was soon accusing Baxter and Steggall of the same charges Peters had brought against them. In addition he accused them of advising Meli to seek advice from the British at Mombasa over the head of the German officials at Moshi.³³ The presence of the missionaries at Moshi made them vulnerable to the accusation that they were Meli's chief advisers.

Events on the mountain in 1891-1892 were mounting to a crisis. It was clear that Meli would not rest content while Marealle, in collaboration with the German administrator, undermined his influence and prestige. Marealle, on his side, was determined to take advantage of his alliance with the Germans and arrange for the defeat of Meli, which he could not accomplish alone. The situation was further complicated by the fact that Meli had not succumbed to the German administration. Meli, like Sina of Kibosho or his father Mandara, could be brought to agree upon a friendly treaty for German occupation of Moshi only by force of arms. This explosive situation was ripe for intrigue and Marealle took the opportunity to

³³ von Soden to Portal, February 21, 1892, in Portal to Lord Salisbury, June 12, 1892, F.O. 84/2231, P.R.O.

create the atmosphere in which the German^Ns attacked Meli from their base at Marangu.

Marealle arranged for Mawalla to shoot a soldier whom von Bülow had entrusted with a letter to Meli. He planned for the murder to be carried out in Meli's own country, and Mawalla was to report to von Bülow that the murder had been perpetrated on the order of Meli. Marealle believed this would provide the cause for von Bülow to send a punitive expedition against Meli. Joseph Mawalla, the grandson of Mawalla, and Petro Marealle, have provided information to prove the truth of the plan although they disagree as to who executed the murder.³⁴ What is important, however, is that the plan was executed as arranged by Marealle and the news delivered to von Bülow who then set out on his ill-fated punitive expedition against Meli in 1892, only to be killed along with a few other German soldiers who accompanied him.³⁵ The rest of the German officers who escaped death abandoned the Marangu post for the coast. Meli's success over the German force greatly enhanced his prestige and altered the fortunes and

³⁴Interview with Marealle, February 2 & 4, 1966 and communication from Marealle, April 5, 1966. Interview with Joseph Mawalla, June 10, 1966.

³⁵Tucker to Portal, June 19, 1892, in Portal to Lord Salisbury, June 30, 1892, F.O. 84/2231, P.R.O. Steggall to Lang, June 22, 1892, G3 A5/08, C.M.S. Archives, London.

fate of Marealle whom Meli was soon to invade.

But of serious consequence to the position of the C. M. S. at Moshi was the fact that rumours soon spread that they had been involved in the fight and had supplied Meli with arms. It was also believed in German circles that one of the C. M. S. missionaries had led the army that defeated von Bülow. In view of the small force under von Bülow and the superior and better-armed Meli force, it is very unlikely that Meli needed the arms of the missionaries. It is still more unlikely that he needed a missionary to lead a force in a country whose terrain the missionary least knew. To avert the impending trouble with the Germans, Steggal tried to seek a peaceful solution to the problems created by von Bülow's defeat and therefore acted as intermediary between the Germans and Meli.³⁶ Von Sode, the governor, apparently wanted a peaceful solution also, if Meli would agree to a return to peace, compensation of property lost by the Germans and the return of a military force to the mountain.³⁷ It is unlikely that Meli would have agreed to yield to the

³⁶ Steggal to Lang, July 30, 1892, G3 A5/08, C. M. S. Archives, London.

³⁷ Ibid. Also interview with Petro Merinyo, June 20 and 24, 1966.

German terms, which amounted to reoccupation. Meli, like his father Mandara, least wanted the occupation of the mountain by an alien power for this would have meant also that the influence of Marealle would be restored with the coming of the Germans.

If Steggal had succeeded in persuading Meli to accept the reoccupation of Moshi by the Germans he would have certainly dispelled the belief, widely held by the German officials, that the two C. M. S. missionaries at Moshi had helped to bring about the defeat of von Bulow. This would have helped to ease the tense atmosphere between the C. M. S. and the Germans, and probably put off a second German expedition against Moshi for some time.

Failure to achieve a peaceful solution with Meli led to the dispatch to Kilimanjaro of a strong army under von Schele from the German headquarters at the coast. With the help of 800 Kibosho warriors and provisions from Marealle, the German force defeated Meli and finally forced him to come to terms in September 1892.³⁸ Von Soden, the governor of what was then German East Africa, believed that in the interests of Germany and of peace on the mountain the C. M. S. had to move out of Moshi. He wrote:

³⁸Stahl, pp. 264-265.

Meli's deeds and sayings leave no doubt but that for the presence of the English Mission Station at Moshi, the backing of the missionaries naturally connected with the cause, the display of the English flag in his village. . . have in his mind created the illusion as if he was under British protection and relying on this supposed fact could permit himself every possible impertinence towards the German authorities. I prevail upon you to order the English Mission Society to order the speedy withdrawal at Moshi [sic].³⁹

The Consul General at Zanzibar, Gerald Portal, telegraphed Tucker that the governor of German East Africa, with the approval of the Foreign Office in Germany, had ruled that the C.M.S. would have to leave Moshi.⁴⁰ The C.M.S. reluctantly agreed to move but instead of going far away from Moshi they moved to Taveta which was only forty miles distant and where there was already sufficient contact with Moshi to cause von Soden to be alarmed.⁴¹

It was likely that the C.M.S. missionaries operating from the British sphere at Taveta would exercise greater influence on the affairs of Moshi since they were so close. Von Soden

³⁹Soden to Portal, September 4, 1892, in Portal to Lord Salisbury, September 22, 1892, F.O. 84/2233, P.R.O.

⁴⁰Portal to Tucker, September 6, 1892, in Portal to Lord Salisbury, September 22, 1892, F.O. 84/2233, P.R.O.

⁴¹Soden to Portal, November 8, 1892, in Portal to Lord Salisbury, November 24, 1892, F.O. 84/2234, P.R.O.

was infuriated at Steggal's insolence in refusing to accept the compensation he had already agreed to and petitioned the Foreign Office for the removal of Steggal from Taveta and for the closing down of the mission station.⁴² The mission at Taveta was not closed but Salisbury Square moved Steggal from there.⁴³

The role of the C.M.S. at Moshi in the politics of the Chagga came to an end in September, 1892. The involvement of the missionaries with the politics of Mandara and after 1891, with those of Meli and the Chagga is in itself a very interesting episode. The C.M.S. wavered in its support of Meli. Steggal, on behalf of the mission, brought his pro-European inclinations to the fore when in 1892 he advised Meli to accept German re-occupation of Moshi. It may well be that he knew that this was bound to come but it was more the interests of the mission that determined the line he pursued than the interests of Meli or the Chagga.

The withdrawal of the C.M.S. from Moshi came at a time when the Society was also campaigning for the annexation of Uganda by the British. The success of this campaign is relevant to

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Baylis to Steggal, February 9, 1893, G3 A5/L 5, C.M.S. Archives, London.

to the work of the missions in Kenya insofar as the annexation of Uganda meant also that of Kenya, which area, as far as the British Company and the missions were concerned, was only a highway to Uganda. The previous year the British East Africa Company was faced with a financial crisis and so gave notice that it would withdraw from Uganda that year. The Anglo-German treaty of 1890 had ended the race for the acquisition of Uganda between the British and the Germans.⁴⁴ It also put to an end the rivalry between the Protestants, Catholics and Muslims at the court of Mwanga, the kabaka of Buganda. Early that year the Christians, Catholics and Protestants had succeeded in bringing Mwanga back to power after he had been driven out of his kingdom by the Muslims who had installed Kalema as kabaka.⁴⁵ As a result of their success the Christians divided the offices of the kingdom between them. The arrival of Frederick Lugard as the representative of the Company, however, placed the Protestants in a leading position and alienated the Catholics. Indeed the treaty that Lugard signed with Mwanga when he arrived marked the ascendancy of the Protestants in

⁴⁴ Oliver and Mathew, History of East Africa, pp. 401-402.

⁴⁵ Ibid., pp. 136-137.

Buganda. The rivalry between the Catholics and the Protestants that grew with the occupation of Uganda by the Company was settled permanently in 1892.⁴⁶ Then the rivalry broke into the open and there was civil war in which the Protestants, with Lugard representing the Company, were ranged against Mwanga and the Catholics. The Protestant party won and Lugard forced on Mwanga a treaty which placed the Protestants in Buganda in a position of supremacy. Henceforth the Company and consequently the British became supreme in Uganda.

But the greater problem facing the Protestants was the intention of the Company to withdraw from Uganda that year, in 1891.⁴⁷ East Africa was no El Dorado and it did not hold out many commercial attractions to potential investors. By 1891 the cost of administration, military expeditions and expenses involved in fitting out a caravan through 800 miles of Buganda, proved beyond the means of the Company and retrenchment and withdrawal from the distant interior became necessary. The directors therefore gave notice of withdrawal from Uganda in 1891. Mackinnon, the Chairman of the Company, was able

⁴⁶Ibid., pp. 148-149.

⁴⁷Oliver and Mathew, History of East Africa, p. 387.

to postpone evacuation from Buganda to enable the missionaries to prepare for the move and was helped by a generous contribution of £40,000 from the friends of the mission.⁴⁸ Even when the Company's expenditure of 1892 was £80,000 and its income £35,000, Lord Salisbury, the Conservative Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary, thrust the decision for withdrawal from Uganda or for holding on, onto the Liberal government that took over in August. The decision was primarily a political one and not one that could be decided by the British Company. After all, it was the government, indeed the Conservative Party, that had chosen the British Company as a means of extending British rule in the Nile headwaters. But by 1892 the "chartered company as an instrument of the Nile Valley Doctrine," writes Robinson, "was finished and the Foreign Office was forced to look for other methods of holding Uganda."⁴⁹

The role of the C.M.S. among other pressure groups in campaigning for the retention of Uganda by the British government is significant. The Liberal Government that took over from the Con-

⁴⁸Stock, III, p.439.

⁴⁹R. Robinson, J. Callager and A. Deny, Africa and the Victorians (London, 1961), p. 310.

servative Government was committed to non-involvement in the acquisition of colonial territory. The commitment of the government to Irish Home Rule was interpreted to mean non-involvement in imperial extension elsewhere as well.

Alfred Tucker, now the Bishop of the Uganda diocese, led the campaign for the C.M.S. He did not fail to move the British public and a few of the reluctant Liberal leaders when he put forward the argument that British withdrawal from Uganda would mean the abandonment of the Christians of Buganda to barbarism and Islam.⁵⁰ The African Christians had proved their cause through the test of time and to leave them to the forces of past enemies would be a breach of faith on the part of the British government. The coming of the Company, the bishop added, had changed the existing relations between the C.M.S. and the natives, and between the C.M.S. and its adherents. The C.M.S. and its adherents had supported the British Company's treaty with King Mwanga. The Muslims and the Catholics, however, saw the treaty as a triumph of Protestantism in Uganda, especially since such a treaty gave them a preponderant share in the division of the country's counties. The withdrawal of the British Company without its replacement by the British govern-

⁵⁰ Oliver, The Missionary Factor in East Africa, p. 155.

ment, the bishop maintained, would create a vacuum in Buganda that could only lead to civil war and the murder of Protestant Christians both black and white. In a moving appeal to the British government and the public, 'Tucker wrote:

To tear up the treaties that we have signed, after having thus compromised the English missionaries and their adherents and on the faith of which the latter were led to throw in their lot with the English Company; to break pledges given in the most solemn manner; to repudiate obligations entered into with deliberation and aforethought; and then to disclaim all responsibility for the consequences that must inevitably ensue, would be to my mind, to adopt a course of action that I dare not at the present moment trust myself to characterize, and one that I cannot believe would ever be sanctioned by any Government of Her Majesty the Queen.⁵¹

This was certainly a moving imperialistic cry from the C. M. S. that added yet another strong voice to the forces pressing the government to retain Uganda under the Crown. The Liberal Government was persuaded, and here they found an ally in Lord Rosebery who wanted the annexation of Uganda. He appointed Gerald Portal as Special Commissioner to report on the best means of dealing with the country. Lord Rosebery, however, had secretly instructed him to declare Uganda a protectorate.⁵²

⁵¹Stock, III, p. 446. (Quotation thereto.)

⁵²Oliver and Mathew, History of East Africa, p. 388.

In 1894 a protectorate was declared over Uganda and the following year what is now Kenya became the East African Protectorate.⁵³ A Special Commissioner was appointed for Uganda. But the East African Protectorate was placed under the charge of the Consul General at Zanzibar who became Consul General and Commissioner for the Protectorate. This arrangement would seem to suggest that the relative insignificance hitherto attached to this territory was to be continued. Through the seventies and eighties this area had been only a highway for missionaries, travellers and the Company personnel to the Great Lakes and the kingdom of Buganda.

The Christian missionary side of this annexation of Kenya and the Arab coast by the British is that it placed the work of the British Protestant Missions on a permanent basis all over the area. They could now launch their campaign against slavery successfully. With their mission stations now in a British protectorate, the Protestant missions could confidently expand into untapped areas in the highlands with the full protection of the British government. In 1896 the British government began the construction of the Kenya-Uganda railway which, among other things, was to speed up and facilitate occupation of the highlands

⁵³Ibid., p. 389.

of Kenya by the British missions, as well as others.

Arthur Hardinge, the new Consul General for Zanzibar and the Commissioner for the East Africa Protectorate, arrived at Mombasa to take over the administration of the protectorate. At an open baraza with the Wali of Mombasa and Arab elders, Lloyd Mathews, the first Minister at Zanzibar, hastily assured the Arabs that their laws and customs would be respected, thus dispelling the fear that the substitution of British rule for Company rule would be immediately followed by abolition.⁵⁴ Hardinge, however, was faced with the rebellion of the Arabs on the coast.

In 1895 it was clear that the Arabs on the northern coast were going to resist openly. Early that year a dispute arose at Takaungu where the nominee of the British Company for the post of Wali, upon the death of the incumbent, Salim bin Hamis, was not acceptable to the majority of the Mazrui. Mbaruk bin Rashid, a newpew of the Wali of Gazi, claimed he had a legal right to succeed according to Mohamedan law. However, when Hardinge took over in 1895 the dispute developed into an open rebellion of the Mazrui, led by Mbaruk of Gazi, against the British as a resistance against the imposition of alien rule on the coast.

⁵⁴ L. W. Hollingsworth, Zanzibar under the Foreign Office, 1890-1913 (London, 1953), p. 107.

Mbaruk held considerable power over the coast; his authority extended from Unba to Mombasa, and his influence in the interior was paramount over the Wadigo and the Wanduruma.⁵⁵

The Arabs' first attack was naturally directed at the mission stations. Almost all the missions suffered several attacks and houses and property were destroyed. Rabai was twice attacked.⁵⁶ These stations were tangible signs of the alien rule and the attack on the Arab religion and social structure, which the missionaries had made, made the missions the first targets of attack.

In the struggle, however, the succession issue overshadowed the major issue of religion and slavery which would have certainly rallied the support of the majority of coastal Arabs with far greater results than the government would have been able to contain. In this issue of succession to Takaungu, the Arabs were divided into two camps and there was, therefore, no strong rallying force as, say, that of Islam against the infidels. Hardinge reported that it was fortunate that the quarrel arose out of a mere political ques-

⁵⁵ Hardinge to Lord Salisbury, April 22, 1896, F. O. 107/51, P. R. O.

⁵⁶ Hardinge to Lord Salisbury, July 6, 1895, F. O. 107/36, P. R. O.

tion rather than resistance to the abolition of slavery which would have united them all against the Europeans because it would have given a religious import to the movement.⁵⁷ Consequently the Mazrui Arabs were defeated, with the help of troops from India.

About the same time that the Commissioner was engaged in the hostilities between the British and the Arabs for supremacy of the coast, the missionaries, with the C. M. S. in the lead, addressed themselves to the question of slavery. In England the missionaries had a powerful mouthpiece to speak for abolition in the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society which was reformed out of the Anti-Slavery Society after the Emancipation Act of 1833. The Anti-Slavery Society was committed to the total abolition of slavery in the British Empire. So the Society began to campaign in England for the abolition of slavery in Zanzibar, after 1890 when, under the Anglo-German Treaty Zanzibar became a British protectorate and hence part of the British Empire. The Brussels Act, signed by the powers with interests in Africa, added more strength to the Society's struggle for abolition, for it made it obligatory for Great Britain to abolish slavery

⁵⁷ Hardinge to Lord Salisbury, April 12, 1896, F. O. 107/51, P. R. O.

in Zanzibar and in British territories.

In 1895 the case for the abolition of slavery on the coast that formed part of the East African Protectorate was even stronger than for Zanzibar. The coast hitherto leased to the Company by the Sultan, formed part of the Protectorate and fell, therefore, under the British Empire. Alfred Tucker was quick to point out to the British authorities in East Africa and London that unlike Zanzibar, where the Sultan was executive on the Mombasa coast, the British government, through the Commissioner, was the executive.⁵⁸ There was therefore no question of postponing immediate abolition on the coast since it was already illegal for slavery to exist in a British-administered territory. He wrote:

the question of immediate abolition is more or less one of finance and energetic government. . . . Knowing what I do of the traffic of upcountry and slave life at the coast I earnestly hope that no considerations of the expenses involved or the labour entailed will be allowed to interfere. . . with the adoption of a policy so righteous in itself and which is to be of beneficial results.⁵⁹

As for Zanzibar, the missionaries and the Anti-Slavery Society argued that abolition should have been effected five years before

⁵⁸Tucker, I, p. 66.

⁵⁹Ibid.

when Zanzibar became a British protectorate. Slavery in Zanzibar, they argued, had existed illegally for five years. But on this issue the British representatives at Zanzibar were not agreed. They argued, in economic terms, against abrupt abolition. They held the view that wholesale and immediate abolition would ruin the economy of the islands and it would make the Arab plantation owners bankrupt. They preferred perpetuating slavery until it died a natural death to strangling the whole economy of the islands and the coast by advocating abrupt abolition. Gerald Portal, Consul General, 1892, summed up the feeling of the British Consulate at Zanzibar:

it is admitted by everyone who has had personal acquaintance and experience of the social conditions of this country. . . that any measure involving a sudden and complete cessation of this system of slavery and the wholesale liberation of all existing slaves, would be calculated to cause social revolution, entailing absolute ruin on hundreds of Arab land owners and proprietors to an extent that would neither be politic nor justified.⁶⁰

The British Government, which was committed to little expenditure in overseas territories, was more apt to support the view of their representatives at Zanzibar than those expressed by their missionaries as long as such a policy involved the Brit-

⁶⁰ Portal to Lord Salisbury, September 23, 1889, F.O. 84/1980, P.R.O.

ish Government in very little expenditure.

Lord Kimberley, the Foreign Secretary, had only instructed Hardinge in his appointment to

insist on the faithful execution of the measures which have already been resolved upon for the purpose of the gradual abolition of slavery in the Sultan's Dominions and to recommend any further measures which might seem to you feasible for facilitating and accelerating this object without injustice to the Mohamedan owners.⁶¹

These instructions fell far short of the expectations of the missionaries and the abolitionists who wanted immediate abolition.

The measures against slavery that Hardinge was to insist upon had been passed by Seyyid Ali in August, 1890,⁶² but they were made void by the Sultan's proclamation, in agreement with Consul Euan Smith, made almost immediately due to fear of rebellion by the Arabs, against the original decree. The decree was most revolutionary for the Arab landowners. Had it been enforced it would have had far-reaching results. The decree forbade all transactions in slaves; the slaves of a master with no child to inherit them became free upon his death and the houses of slave brokers were to be closed forwith. Any slave owners who treated his slaves cruelly

⁶¹ Kimberley to Hardinge, May 5, 1894, F. O. 107/16, P.R.O.

⁶² Euan Smith to Lord Salisbury, August 3, 1890, F. O. 84/2063, P. R. O.

was to be brought before the courts and punished, and those that excessively and inhumanely punished their slaves were to forfeit their right to own slaves. Slaves could not accuse their masters of cruelty before the Kadhis. British Indian subjects could not own or engage in human traffic for, under the 1890 Anti-Slavery Decree, they were forbidden to do so under the name of their Arab or Swahili wives, a practice to which they had hitherto resorted to evade the law. The decree extended its area of operation to the freed slaves who, it was reported and proved, had slaves. It therefore forbade them from holding and trading in slaves. Most important of all, slaves could now purchase their freedom at a fair and reasonable price.⁶³ As a result of the decree Arab ill-feeling was widespread at Zanzibar and Pemba and rumours and reports were current at Zanzibar that the Arabs were planning to sabotage the treaty and create chaos by murdering the Sultan and the British Consul, Euan Smith. There were even greater fears that the slaves, jubilant over the new decree, would take the law into their own hands and rise up against their masters.⁶⁴ The voice of the Arab cause and consequently those who wanted

⁶³Hollingsworth, Appendix I, pp. 217-219.

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 54.

to perpetuate the exploitation of one class by another, for economic reasons, triumphed in August when Euan Smith advised a countermeasure to give the Arabs control of their slaves. The Sultan issued two proclamations that made the Anti-Slavery Decree void. The first proclamation, issued on August 9, made running away by slaves or actions liable to cause a disturbance punishable, and the second proclaimed that the slave owners were not obligated to accept self-redemption by slaves through payment of money.⁶⁵ Thus the slaves were in no better a position than they were before the decree was passed; they could not buy their freedom nor could they run away and seek refuge in the mission stations. On this question the Foreign Office was very emphatic. It declared that the missionaries had no legal right to give refuge to slaves and that when they granted refuge or asylum in extreme cases of peril and on humanitarian grounds they did so at their own risk.⁶⁶

The self-redemption clause caused many difficulties for it was necessary for those wanting to purchase their freedom to seek employment with their masters, with the Sultan's govern-

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Salisbury to Euan Smith, February 1, 1889, F. O. 84/1973; P. R. O.

ment or on the mainland coast with the British Company. Slave owners could always prolong the time required by paying as little as possible or by refusing to employ them for cash. Nonetheless it was a great step towards emancipation even though the slaves had to pay for their freedom.

The anti-slavery policy that Hardinge was required, by the Foreign Office, to pursue was therefore meaningless and was at best aimed only at ameliorating the conditions of the slaves. There was to be emancipation but on the basis of justice and full benefits to the slave owners. Moreover it was to come in the distant future when the government were to substitute for slave labour free labour and Indian coolie labour, efficient and regular enough to sustain the wealth of the Arabs and to keep the economy of the islands going. These conditions were in full accord with the ideas of the new Consul General.

But in 1895 the Anti-Slavery Society and the missionaries stepped up their campaign for abolition. Their representatives, among them Jr. J. A. Pearse, M. P., who was a Quaker and ardent advocate of immediate abolition, raised the question in Parliament.⁶⁷ Backed by strong public opinion the House of Commons approved immediate abolition in principle. Lord Kimberley

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 136.

telegraphed Hardinge the following morning to expedite his recommendations for abolition. He further stated that the British government was willing to make up for "the deficit in loss of revenue with a grant from the British Treasury."⁶⁸

However, Arthur Hardinge was the greatest protagonist of the Arab slave-owning class and as Consul General and Commissioner for Zanzibar and the East African Protectorate, he consequently pressed for the maintenance of the status quo in the islands and on the mainland. Hardinge served in the Middle East from 1886-1894.⁶⁹ There he came into contact with the Arabs and studied with admiration and enthusiasm their culture, customs, laws, religion and politics. It was in the Middle East that his sympathy with Islam and its social structure was formed as he discovered that slavery was bound up with the whole social structure. For example, he was convinced that it was difficult to talk of the abolition of slavery without the larger question of the destruction of the whole Arab social structure. The admiration he bore for the Arabs and their social structure therefore determined the policy that he pursued when he was

⁶⁸ Kimberley to Hardinge, March 9, 1895, F.O. 107/40 (telegram), P. R. O.

⁶⁹ Arthur Hardinge, A Diplomatist in the East (London, 1928), pp. 246-250.

transferred to East Africa in 1894. Hardinge began to support the Arabs and their economic interests, which meant support for the postponement of the abolition of slavery at Zanzibar and on the mainland.

Hardinge's argument against immediate abolition in Zanzibar revolved around the question of the economic ruin such a step would bring to the Zanzibar Protectorate. He pointed out that such a step would ruin the clove industry which was the backbone of the islands' economy. He estimated that the Sultanate would be faced with a deficit of £35,000 a year,⁷⁰ a figure that was likely to persuade the Foreign Office to compromise public opinion and adopt a policy of gradual abolition which would ultimately involve the British Treasury in less financial expenditure on the islands. However the Anti-Slavery movement stepped up its pressure. This time they appointed their own representative, Donald Mackenzie, to gather the necessary data. Donald Mackenzie pointed out that immediate abolition would not entail the economic ruin of the country as "the freed slaves would still have to work for their living and if they were paid adequate wages. . . they would work much better."⁷¹

⁷⁰Hardinge to Kimberley, March 13, 1895, F. O. 107/35, P.R.O.

⁷¹Hollingsworth, p. 139.

Lord Salisbury, who took over from the Liberals in June, 1895, accepted Hardinge's proposal, notwithstanding public pressure, that emancipation should be made gradually, that the Arabs should be fairly compensated, and that concubines who, Hardinge had argued, formed their harem and therefore, ultimately, became wives once they had children by their masters, were not to be affected by the decree. In April, 1897 the Sultan signed the law for the abolition of the legal status of slavery in Zanzibar and Pemba. Henceforth the machinery to effect gradual emancipation was instituted.

The abolition of slavery on the mainland coast of the East African Protectorate the missions had pressed for was not included in the 1897 Act. Hardinge had succeeded in persuading the Foreign Office to put it off. It was certainly in the best interests of the Arabs as a whole that if abolition were to come it should not come at the same time on both the mainland and islands. Hardinge had seized the opportunity of the Mazrui rebellion of 1895-1896 to press that the abolition of slavery on the mainland coast must be postponed to the distant future, until the coast was pacified. Early in 1896, fearing that the missionaries and the Anti-Slavery Society were swinging public opinion to immediate abolition, he telegraphed the Foreign

Office requesting that "no measure against slavery may be imposed till the coast [was] pacified. Elders of Mombasa and Malindi have expressed their dissatisfaction with the operation of the recent laws against slavery."⁷²

Early in 1895 when Tucker took up the case for abolition in the mainland, Hardinge maintained that abolition here would be far more serious than on the islands and was likely to meet with "open armed resistance in so far as besides the Arab chiefs there were beyond the ten mile strip large colonies of runaway slaves, who themselves are slave owners and live by stealing or decoying slaves away from the coast."⁷³ The request for postponement until he had pacified the coast received approval from the Foreign Office.

Meanwhile Hardinge painted as good a picture as he could of the conditions of the slaves on the mainland to persuade the Foreign Office and public opinion in England that the slavery that existed here was quite different from that in Zanzibar and, particularly, different from the slavery that had existed on the

⁷²Hardinge to Lord Salisbury, January 19, 1896, F. O. 107/49, P. R. O.

⁷³Hardinge to Kimberley, June 24, 1895, F. O. 107/36, P. R. O.

American and West Indian plantations. Hardinge put forward the thesis that the kind of slavery that existed on the mainland coast was rural slavery comparable to the "metayer" system in France than to other slave systems.⁷⁴ Here the Arabs owned large estates of coconuts, corn and cassava worked by slave labour. However, he argued, the Arab landlords were absentee landlords, living in the coastal towns of Mombasa, Malindi, Lamu and Vanga. Thus the slaves were left pretty much to themselves as small farmers who, in return for their right to cultivate the owner's land, paid a share of the harvest in rent. Their local affairs were in the hands of their own village elders or headmen. Such an argument was plausible to outside observers and to the British Foreign Office which was committed to retrenchment overseas.

In 1897 Hardinge had won his battle for the postponement of the abolition of slavery on the mainland. While the Foreign Office, by an Act of Parliament, abolished slavery in Zanzibar that year it put off abolition on the mainland to the distant future.

At about the same time Tucker took a test case to the court at Mombasa to prove that a majority of the slaves on the mainland

⁷⁴Hardinge to Kimberley, June 24, 1895, F. O. 107/36, P. R. O.

were illegally held by the Arabs.⁷⁵ Following upon the Act of 1873 that brought an end to the East African slave trade, the Sultan of Zanzibar, Seyyid Barghash, issued a proclamation in 1876 to put into force the terms of the Act in his East African dominions. Under the proclamation slave-trading was henceforth declared illegal as was the importation of slaves from the interior. The bishop brought before the Provincial Court at Mombasa the case of Kheri Karibu who, the bishop alleged, had been enslaved and held illegally since she had been brought from the mainland after 1876. At the hearing Tucker produced enough evidence before the Arab assessors to establish the fact that she had been brought from the interior after 1876. With the evidence before them, the Arab assessors declared that Kheri Karibu was free since she was illegally held.⁷⁶ By implication the decision meant that every slave who had been brought from upcountry since April 1876 was illegally held. The bishop estimated that the number of slaves affected by the pronouncement at Mombasa Court was three-quarters of the number of slaves then living in Mombasa and coast districts. But above all the

⁷⁵Tucker, II, p. 103.

⁷⁶Ibid.

the ruling of the court invalidated the argument of the British government that the large number of slaves to be emancipated would involve the British government in a great deal of financial expenditure for Arab compensation. According to the pronouncement the British government would be obligated to find money to compensate the Arabs only for the loss of one-quarter of the whole of the slave population on the mainland coast. The majority would be emancipated without any financial obligation to the Arabs since they were held illegally. Tucker said that

the far reaching character of this decision was little realised by the Mohammedan assessors to whose interpretation of the decree the judgement was due or I hardly think they would have ventured to identify themselves with such a pronouncement. Its bearing on the abolition was very close [for] it reduced almost to vanishing point the amount that would be due in way of compensation.⁷⁷

Hardinge, however, did not give up the battle for the Arab landed aristocracy on the mainland. He was sure that abolition would come but first he must cripple the power of the missions and second, he must ensure that the Arab plantation owners would get the labour that they needed when abolition came. As for the second, Hardinge proposed that abolition should be followed by corvee, emigration laws and taxation of freed slaves,⁷⁸ devices

⁷⁷Ibid.

⁷⁸Hardinge to Kimberley, June 24, 1895, F. O. 403/36, P. R. O.

all directed at ensuring that labour to the Arab estates would not be crippled after emancipation, and that the freed slaves became slaves again only in a little different way. For the first he decided to place the civil authority at Rabai under the jurisdiction of the Wali of Mombasa.⁷⁹ Hitherto the colonial government and, even more so, the British Company, had recognised the missionary in charge of Rabai as a civil authority over the subdistrict. The missionary had held such authority since 1874 and the British Company recognised this arrangement from 1888 to 1895. But Hardinge was not prepared to continue this arrangement which placed the local administration of Rabai with its predominantly Muslim population in the hands of the C.M.S. missionary at Rabai. He maintained that he wanted uniformity in the local administration of the coast. He placed Rabai under the jurisdiction of the Wilayet of Mombasa and appointed Ali bin Sultan as assistant to the Wali of Mombasa "with immediate jurisdiction over the whole Wilayet outside the island [of Mombasa] and substituting him for the missionary in charge as the chief local authority in Rabai."⁸⁰

⁷⁹Hardinge to Lord Salisbury, August 24, 1897, F.O. 107/79, P.R.O.

⁸⁰Ibid.

The Foreign Office overruled him in this as it did over proposals that every runaway slave should be compelled to compensate his Arab master for deserting him.⁸¹ George N. Curzon, Under Secretary of State at the Foreign Office, maintained that such a step was designed exclusively in the interests of the slave owners and, as such, would be bitterly opposed by the missionaries, and attacked in Parliament. He could not approve that the C. M. S. should be deprived of privileges enjoyed for many years. Curzon was irritated by what he called Hardinge's pro-slavery feelings and by his combat with the bishop. Curzon minuted:

He [Hardinge] has made a series of proposals all of which we have had to veto and which have. . . attempted to strain proclamation, regulations and edicts rather unfairly in the interests of the system which he supports but which the House of Commons will not have. None of these successive proposals of his will bear the light of official publication.⁸²

The C. M. S. was not deterred by the hostile attitude adopted by Hardinge. With the support of the Foreign Office, which overruled the measures Hardinge put forward, the battle the mission was waging for the abolition of slavery seemed almost won. In

⁸¹ Salisbury to Hardinge, February 23, 1898, F. O. 107/92, P. R. O.

⁸² Curzon to Salisbury (Minute), May 9, 1898, F. O. 107/92, P. R. O.

1898, a month after the Foreign Office overruled Hardinge's proposal that runaway slaves should be forced to compensate their masters, the C.M.S. Committee in England addressed a memorial to Lord Salisbury, the Prime Minister, calling for the immediate abolition of slavery in the British East African Protectorate.⁸³ Abolition, however, had to wait eleven years before it was complete.

Meanwhile Alfred Tucker and Arthur Hardinge left the East African Protectorate. Hardinge left for Persia in 1900, a few months after Bishop Tucker had left to take over the diocese of Uganda when the East Africa Mission was divided into two. Tucker was able to carry on his campaign for the abolition of slavery from Uganda. The departure of Hardinge from East Africa, however, marked the end of the supremacy of Arab interests on the coast. Tucker hailed the transfer of Hardinge as dismissal from East Africa, which he had pressed for, while Hardinge hailed that of Bishop Tucker with equal exaltation.⁸⁴

William George Peel, the new bishop of the diocese of Mombasa, carried Tucker's banner with equal vigour and dedi-

⁸³Fox to Lord Salisbury, April 30, 1898, G3 A5/L8, C.M.S., Archives, London.

⁸⁴Hardinge to Lord Salisbury, February 9, 1899, F.O. 2/189.

cation. In 1907 came the long-awaited abolition of slavery on the coast of Kenya. The Foreign Office had agreed to compensate the Arabs for the loss of their slaves and courts for this purpose were set up in all the big coastal towns in 1910.⁸⁵ The following year was the last opportunity for the Arabs to claim compensation as was also the case in Zanzibar. In 1919 Charles Hobley reported that the number of slaves liberated from October 1, 1907 through April 30, 1916 was 7,683 and the total amount of compensation given to the Arabs for the same period was 449,757/55 rupees.⁸⁶

The abolition of slavery in Kenya marked the successful end of a long battle which the missionaries had been waging since 1874. The missionaries could well congratulate themselves upon so successfully achieving one of the major objectives that David Livingstone had bequeathed to them when he died. The missionaries, undeterred by slavery, could now embark upon the evangelization of the interior of Kenya, a task that had already begun around the turn of the century.

⁸⁵Hollingsworth, p. 158.

⁸⁶Hobley to the Chief Secretary, Nairobi, February 5, 1919, Coast 47/1123, Nairobi Archives.

CHAPTER III

THE FIRST GENERATION OF AFRICANS

IN THE MISSION STATIONS

1874-1904

No historian writing on missionaries in Kenya or in the larger field of missionaries in East Africa has touched on the part that the first generation of Africans, the freed slaves, played in the mission stations. Eugene Stock, in his standard, four volume, study of the Church Missionary Society, published in 1899, made more than the casual scan of Roland Oliver's Missionary Factor in East Africa which appeared more than fifty years later. Mission stations in Africa formed the first centers of western civilization where Africans were gathered, often by a single European missionary, to learn the Bible and, in due course, to recite passages from it. These first African Christians, sometimes misfits and social outcasts from their own society, but mostly freed slaves, especially in Sierra Leone on the West Coast and Mombasa on the East Coast, were to be the first missionaries and evangelists to their own people.

In 1807 came the abolition of the slave trade. The following year Sierra Leone colony, founded by philanthropists in 1787 as

a home for slaves sent to Africa from England, America and Canada, became a Crown colony¹ and, more importantly, the home for the slaves whom the British Western African Squadron, patrolling the west coast for slaves, captured and turned over to Sierra Leone where they were freed.² The C.M.S. began work among the freed slaves in 1804,³ and missionaries from England organized the colony into parishes. They built schools for boys and girls to provide the freed slaves, and their sons and daughters, with Christian education. The famous Fourah Bay Training College, later to become a university, and the Annie Walsh Training Institution, were built to provide higher education for boys and girls respectively. James Webster writes:

Before the slave trade was completely abolished many ex-slaves of Freetown in the 1840's began for various reasons to immigrate to cities all along the coast. . . . Some returned to their tribes, others searched for their relatives, and some settled in other cities for the sake of trading opportunities available.⁴

¹ Arthur T. Porter, Creoledom: A Study of the Development of Freetown Society (London, 1963), p. 33.

² Ibid., p. 36.

³ James Bertin Webster, The African Churches Among the Yoruba (Oxford, 1964), p. 1.

⁴ Ibid., p. 2.

Thus wherever the freed slaves immigrated into West Africa they, in turn, became missionaries to their own people.

This was the background and the experience that encouraged the C.M.S. to begin a similar colony on the East African coast at Freretown, about ten miles from Mombasa. Prior to 1861 two Acts had been signed between the British government and the Sultan at Zanzibar aimed at limiting the area of slave trade.⁵ By the Treaty of 1845 that forbade trade in slaves outside the Sultan's dominions, slave trade became domestic trade within the dominions of the Sultan. However, the dominions of the Sultan extended over Zanzibar and the East Africa coast as well as Arabia and therefore slave trade between the two parts of the Sultan's dominions was domestic trade, and legal. Until restriction of the importation of slaves to Arabia ceased the British naval cruisers patrolling the extensive ocean found it difficult to intercept Arab dhows. In 1861 the British India Government intervened in a dispute over the succession to the Sultanate, and forced the two claimants to agree to the division of the Sultanate into two, one retaining Zanzibar and the other the Arabian possession.⁶ The two became,

⁵Reginald Coupland, The Exploitation of East Africa 1856-1890 (London, 1939), pp. 153-160.

⁶Ibid., pp. 30-31.

in essence, independent. Therefore the export of slaves from East Africa became illegal. The British naval cruisers operating on the Indian Ocean began successfully to intercept Arab dhows carrying slaves. Some of the slaves freed from Arab dhows on the Indian Ocean, prior to 1873, found safe homes in India, unlike those enroute to America who, when freed, made their homes in Sierra Leone. There was no British territory where slaves rescued from Arab dhows could be landed without risk of being enslaved. From 1847 to 1874 when they finally returned to East Africa, slaves freed on the Indian Ocean lived in Bombay.⁷ In India, we are told, the British India government distributed them indiscriminately: "a few. . . were taken up by Europeans as private servants, a few were sent to school in Bombay and the rest were set at liberty. . . ."⁸

At first the Bombay government was anxious to avoid alienating the predominantly Muslim population at Bombay by turning the freed slaves over to the Christian missions.⁹ An increase in numbers from about 1860 caused problems of settlement to arise; Sir G. Clerk, then Governor of Bombay, wanted also to

⁷ Eugene Stock, History of the Church Missionary Society, 4 vols. (London, 1899-1916), Vol. I, p.431.

⁸ Ibid. ⁹ Ibid., II.

initiate a training programme that would enable them to support themselves.¹⁰ The governor wrote to W. S. Price, then in charge of the C. M. S. Institution at Saranpur, to suggest that the C. M. S. should give industrial training to them in return for a promised subsidy to the missions. With the approval of the C. M. S. Bombay Corresponding Committee, Price therefore began an African Asylum at Sharanpur Institution in 1860. Price wrote:

Viewing it as a providential opening, and hoping that. . . some of those placed under our care might eventually become Evangelists in their own Country, I consented to the proposal of the Government. . . . Some twenty-five or thirty boys and girls already in Bombay were at once transferred to Sharanpur, and thus the African Asylum had its beginning. . . . They came to us in batches varying from twenty to fifty in number, and, as to age, ranging from children of six to young men and women of eighteen or twenty.¹¹

It was popularly referred to as the African Asylum and the arrangement with the government was to make provision for 150.¹² The Bombay Government and the C. M. S. authorities did not intend the freed Africans to remain in India permanently, and the purpose of the Asylum was certainly to avoid their dispersal and recapture as domestic slaves in India, or their entrance into the

¹⁰ W. Price to Hutchinson, July 19, 1873, C A5/017, C.M.S. Archives, London.

¹¹ Ibid. ¹² Ibid.

Muslim community which had much in common with tribal Africa.¹³

At Nassick, Sharanpur, the freed slaves were to be trained as Christians. Moreover, they were to be trained in industrial arts which formed the basis of the institution as a means of their future self-support in India, but more so in preparation for their eventual return to East Africa. There, like the Sierra Leonians, they were to become evangelists and teachers to their own people. So while some of them were trained as catechists, evangelists and teachers, others were trained in carpentry, masonry and bricklaying, and the women were trained in needlework and weaving. The Bombay government granted the C.M.S. at Bombay fourteen shillings per year for each boy, twelve for each girl and in addition paid an apprentice fee for each adult.¹⁴ The C.MS.Proceedings for 1868-1869 states:

All the children attend the school and some have made considerable progress. Five lads have passed the Normal entrance examination and we hope. . .some of them will matriculate at Bombay University and become school masters, either in India or their native land.¹⁵

There are no records available to give us the number of freed slaves made over to the Bombay government. Fairly large

¹³C.M.S. Proceedings, 1867/68, pp.49-50.

¹⁴Ibid. ¹⁵Ibid.

numbers of them began to be rescued from Arab dhows by British naval patrol ships in 1847 when, in that year, "forty-three girls and twelve boys, rescued from Arab vessels in the Persian Gulf, were landed at Bombay."¹⁶ We can only hazard a guess that numbers did increase. What is probably true is that hundreds of Africans did disperse in India, only to be absorbed and to disappear completely. Although only a minor fraction returned, it is with these few we are concerned. An examination of those who mixed with the Muslim population must await an independent study.

In 1874 about 150 Bombay Africans returned to East Africa. Most of them had been settled and trained at Nassick, Sharanpur, from 1860 but, according to W. S. Price, there were also a number from the government farm at Pachora.¹⁷ Of the role the Bombay Africans were to perform in their homeland, Price had no illusions. In 1866 he had reported:

I scarcely anticipated such results when five years ago I consented to take charge of it from Government. It seems in a way not thought of by us it pleased God to

¹⁶Stock, II, p.431.

¹⁷William S. Price, report to the Secretary, C.M.S. on the "Future Prospects of the East African Mission," October 6, 1882, G3 A5/01, C.M.S. Archives, London, p.2. (Hereafter referred to as Price Report 1882.)

give the C.M.S. a chief share in the work of carrying the Gospel to East Africa as well as West Africa thus adding fresh significance to the designation which is given to the Society.¹⁸

In 1864 William Jones and Ishmael Seimler, both Yao, and their Galla wives from the Institution, came out to Rabai to help Reubman.¹⁹ With them came also two young Galla girls to be married to two of Reubman's Wanyika converts at Rabai.²⁰ The following year nine Africans from Sharanpur²¹ volunteered to accompany David Livingstone on his last journey to Central Africa. Susi and Chuma, Jacob Wainwright, a Bombay African, and some of the Sharanpur men whose names we do not have, outlived David Livingstone to bring his dead body from Ujiji where he died in 1873, to the coast and thence to England.²² Wainwright's legacy to East Africa and to the missionary world was his diary which he had kept and in which he recorded the events they had gone through.

The Act for the abolition of the Arab slave trade was signed by the Sultan of Zanzibar in June, 1873. There was an urgent need for the establishment of a colony where slaves henceforth rescued from the Arab dhows evading the treaty would be settled, either

¹⁸C.M.S. Proceedings, 1865/67, p. 82.

¹⁹Ibid., 1865, p. 179. ²⁰Ibid. ²¹Ibid., 1866, p. 262.

²²Stock, III, p. 77.

permanently or temporarily, pending their repatriation to their homes. The last alternative was not feasible since coming from so many different tribes and from as far as the upper reaches of the River Congo and the Lakes Nyasa-Tanganyika area, it would be impossible to trace their original homes and relatives. Besides, the freed slaves had been uprooted from their homes, together with their parents, when they were still very young, and most of them had no relatives or homes to return to. Distance to the interior of East Africa too made a great difference. So from the beginning the settlement was destined to be permanent although it was intended by the C. M. S. to be a training ground for evangelists and missionaries to the East African interior. It is under these circumstances that Sir Bartle Frere recommended the establishment of such a settlement on the coast, and the C. M. S. took it up.

After the Act of 1873 Consular Admiralty Courts were set up at Zanzibar for the purpose of legally freeing those slaves rescued from Arab dhows before they were made over to the missions. From 1874, when the first lot of newly-freed slaves were delivered to the C. M. S. at Freretown, there were to exist two sets of freed slaves: first, the relatively small body of older freed slaves from Bombay and the Bombay Africans, and second,

the newly-freed slaves whose number increased from time to time as new lots of slaves came into the hands of the C.M.S. It is the older group of freed slaves, the Bombay Africans, who did all the spadework in the freed-slave settlements of Freretown and Rabai. And from these two stations, where they served in various jobs and in different capacities, they also tried to spread the gospel all along the coast, especially among the Wanyika. The story of the first generation of Africans in the mission stations is revealed in their own writings and in their relations with the European missionaries and with the African tribes. The newly-freed slaves who were settled at Freretown come into the picture from time to time but their story is overshadowed by that of the Bombay Africans. Even among the latter group two individuals, Jones and David, by far the most educated and articulate, stand out. Because they held positions of responsibility, more information is available concerning their work, which is representative of the work of their group.

The missions which were established in East Africa, either on the coast or in the offshore islands, were delighted at the prospect of working among the freed slaves, firstly because it would provide an outlet for their humanitarian ideals to care, train and provide for the slaves would be physical proof that they were doing

something positive. Secondly, the freed slaves were to be their first Christians and, eventually, the first African agents of Christianity and Western civilization to their own heathen tribesmen. The Universities Mission to Central Africa, established in Zanzibar since 1864, and the Holy Ghost Fathers, at Bagamoyo since 1868, had hitherto received freed slaves even before the Act of 1873.²³ The work of the Holy Ghost Fathers at Bagamoyo had greatly pleased Sir Bartle Frere when he visited all the mission stations on the coast in 1873,²⁴ as an excellent example for the civilization of Africa. He wrote:

I can suggest no change in the general arrangements of the institution with any view to increasing its efficiency as an industrial and civilizing agency and. . . I would warmly recommend it as a model to be followed in any attempt to civilize and evangelize Africa.²⁵

The C.M.S. had considerable advantage over the other missions on the East Coast for it had some of the freed slaves who had been trained in Bombay. Moreover, the society had done similar work on the West Coast and was therefore experienced and ready to embark on similar experiments. As it happened the C.M.S. was the only mission that took up the plan of plant-

²³Bartle Frere to Granville, April 5, 1873, F. O. 84/1390, P. R. O.

²⁴Ibid. ²⁵Ibid.

ing a freed-slave settlement in Africa on a large scale.

Bombay Africans inevitably held positions of leadership at Freretown and Rabai mission stations for about a generation because of their earlier training in Bombay. Most of them returned to the mission stations as educated men, in many ways more educated than some of the white missionaries who were placed over them. Above all, they were qualified as artisans, small traders and agriculturalists:

They were all more or less educated, speaking two Indian languages, Hindustani and Marathi, and most of them possessing some knowledge of English. There were among them several second rate mechanics. . . . some who had had practical training in Indian Agriculture and others who had been employed on the railway. . . . Besides there were some who had received higher education and gave promise of usefulness as traders and evangelists.²⁶

These were all ideals that the Victorian missionaries attached to a flourishing Christian middle class society, and ones that had enabled the Sierra Leonians to develop so quickly into positions of influence and, perhaps, honest living in the three decades of the mid-century.

In the beginning of the settlement at Freretown the first catechist, teachers and artisans, came from among them. In 1876 Rev. J. A. Lamb reported that the Native Church at Freretown

²⁶Price Report 1882, pp. 4-5.

consisted almost entirely of liberated Africans from Bombay.²⁷

In 1879 the population of the settlement at Freretown had grown to 450 of which number there were 100 Bombay Africans.²⁸ There were seventy at Rabai and there were 250 freed slaves.²⁹ By 1888 there were about 3,000 slaves.³⁰

Outstanding among the catechists, teachers and artisans, were George David (died 1884), William Jones (died 1904), Ishmael Seimlar (died 1923), and artisan Thomas Smith. From the freshly freed slaves at Freretown came James Deimler who was later ordained in 1896. The three performed outstanding missionary work as catechists in the initial period of the C.M.S. work at Mombasa. It is mainly through their writings that we get an idea of their role in the mission stations and on the coast generally. William Jones and George David were in charge of Rabai and Freretown for short spells between 1878 and 1890. In laying the foundation of the mission station Price used them as interpreters,

²⁷J. A. Lamb to Fenn, October 28, 1876, C A5/MI-6, C.M.S. Archives, London.

²⁸C.M.S. Proceedings, 1879, p.152.

²⁹C.M.S. Proceedings, 1880/1882, pp. 29-30.

³⁰Stock, III, pp. 90-91.

teachers, preachers and artisans, saying that he did not know what he would have done without them; "others such as William Jones and George David, may be quoted as fair specimens of earnest, practical Christian men well fitted to exert a useful influence upon their countrymen."³¹ William Streeter reported in 1879, that a few of the best men among them were teachers and catechists, that they were trustworthy, and were all anxious for the welfare of their own country.³² The pioneering work at Freretown often taxed their energy, especially when the problems of resettling, feeding and teaching the freed slaves was great. In the beginning there was more work than numbers to do it.³³

Outside their pastoral and secular work in the mission stations, they travelled back and forth across the Nyika country on the coast surveying fields for missionary work among the Nyika and also itinerating, either singly or with the resident white missionary who needed them as interpreters and as intermediaries

³¹ Price to Hutchinson, July 19, 1873, C A5/017, C.M.S. Archives, London.

³² J. R. Streeter to Fenn, January 29, 1879, C A5/127, C.M.S. Archives, London.

³³ William Jones to Wright, October 10, 1878, C A5/014, C.M.S. Archives, London.

between them and the Nyika. A study of their letters and journals reveals their concern for the country, and adds much more to the scanty knowledge the missionaries had about the outlying area they were working in at a time when geographical knowledge of the area was so lacking. In 1875 George David visited Godoma where he preached to the Giriama, a section of the Nyika tribe.³⁴ Impressed by the teaching of their fellow African, the Giriama offered to send their children to Rabai for schooling and training, and further requested a Christian teacher.³⁵ David surveyed Jilore, also in the Giriama country, and found it suitable for a mission station. He wrote:

Jilore is about 15 - 20 miles from Malindi; it is a beautiful place and certainly most suitable for a mission station for the Giriama people. From here the gospel could easily be conveyed to the Wakamba in the interior.³⁶

In 1878 William Jones, the other important catechist later to be ordained Deacon in 1885 and ^{made} Archdeacon in 1896, went to the Duruma, another section of the Nyika. At Mazolla, his destination and presumably then the capital of the Duruma, he preached to the people. About Mazolla, he wrote: "it was at one time a

³⁴George David to Wright, "Report on a Visit to Godoma," June, 1875, C.M.S. Archives, London.

³⁵Ibid. ³⁶Ibid.

famous place but it is now deserted."³⁷ He found that the Duruma here had been scattered through civil wars. He believed that the Masai had been the chief cause. Mbaruk of Mombasa, at large in the countryside, he said, was endeavouring to give the finishing stroke by extracting large sums of money, cattle, slaves, etc. He witnessed much of the destruction the Masai had done, and rightly commented on their power. According to William Jones, and all other European travellers, the Masai were a menace to the peace of East Africa.³⁸

Because the Bombay Africans were Africans, they were more acceptable to their own people than the European missionaries. But these catechists were Christian, in the Victorian sense; they denounced the customs, traditions, and the way of life of their tribesmen as "heathen," using the language and the tradition of the Victorian missionaries. They were hardly aware that this was their own Africa. In the minutes for Tuesday, 13 August, William Jones proudly states:

this day many people around Chamamba district came to see the black Mzungu with Chuo (the black European

³⁷ Jones to Wright, August 7, 1878, C A5/014, C.M.S. Archives, London.

³⁸ Ibid.

with the Bible). They were more attracted to me when I showed them the drawing of the Illustrated London News. I then kept the papers aside and told them how infinitely low in the scales of civilization we Africans were in comparison with Americans, Europeans and Asiatics. . . .³⁹

William Jones was not discreet. However, this agrees with his training and with what the European missionaries had succeeded in teaching him in his early days in India.

Jones became concerned about the Christianization of the Nyika in his early days. He had been one of those whom the C.M.S. had sent out, in 1864, to help Johann Reubman in his work among the Nyika. Frere was impressed with William Jones, who thought the Nyika Mission should stress industrial arts rather than the purely theoretical aspects of Christianity. In 1878, after fourteen years of work on the coast, he began to complain of too much preoccupation in settling cases rather than the evangelical work he should have been doing. At the same time he pleaded for more systematic work amongst the Nyika for whom the mission was originally intended, and condemned reports the European missionaries had sent home stating that the mission to the Nyika was a failure. In 1878, like Harry Binns, he believed that the climate was the cause for the coming

³⁹ Ibid.

and going of European missionaries. Nevertheless, he blamed the C.M.S. for not being systematic.⁴⁰ He might have added that the emphasis hitherto paid to the Nyika had been transferred to the freed slaves of Freretown since 1873. William Jones' concern with the evangelization of the Nyika was a genuine one. Many years later, when the emphasis of work was shifting from the coast to the highlands, he expressed deep disappointment with the C.M.S. for the failure to succeed among the Nyika. It might well be that he was also disappointed with his own failure. And so he wrote:

For nearly half a century, my Lord, what has the mission done for the Wanyika people from Digo to Giriama country? All these years have been spent upon Rabai and Freretown. Why not raise new stations between Mwaeba and Jilore? By nature Malindi has no signpost, even of the C.M.S. Kauma on the top of Takaungu, Chonyi, Jibana, Kamoe have all been tantalized from time immemorial with not good results. For half a century the results is one station in the Shimba Hill where Mr. Binns is now with not a single convert.⁴¹

As mediators and intermediaries they did an admirable work. In the heyday of the C.M.S. work at Mombasa they did all the spade-work on the coast and as they travelled through the Giriama country

⁴⁰ Jones to Wright, October 10, 1878, C A5/014 C.M.S. Archives, London.

⁴¹ Jones to Bishop Peel, November 27, 1902, in file marked "Letters to 1913," Archbishop of East Africa's Archives, C.M.S. Nairobi. (Cited hereafter as Bishop's Archives, C.M.S., Nairobi.)

they gave confidence to the Nyika that the Europeans they were travelling with were, after all, their friends.

In the 1880's their role as mediators became indispensable. This was the time of increased European activity in the interior which provoked open hostility on the part of the Africans and the Arabs towards the missionaries. In 1883 William Jones miraculously saved Rabai mission from destruction when the Arabs from the coast attacked the mission stations. Salisbury Square sent him a silver watch for "the singular faith and courage you displayed."⁴² In due course all the tribes came to know, respect and admire him, not because he himself was African, but because they found him a "wise and good friend in their critical times."⁴³ In 1888 William Price sent him to mediate between the Taita and Wray as a last attempt to soften the hearts of the Taita elders to agree to allow Wray to continue mission work among them. The C.M.S. missionaries, as already mentioned, faced formidable opposition from the elders. In 1888 their life was in danger when they were twice attacked. Henry Parker, the second Bishop of East Africa, had blamed Wray for much of

⁴² Marshall Lang to Jones, January 5, 1883, C.M.S. Archives, London.

⁴³ Taylor to Lang, March 17, 1885, G3 A5/05, C.M.S. Archives, London.

the opposition in 1886. Price wrote:

William Jones knows many of them well and is known and respected by them; besides, he is a man of tact and as a native he can reason with them and influence them more than us. If any one can bring these poor misguided people to their senses, it is him [sic]."⁴⁴

Reason with them he did. After his visit Wray and Morris were able to live in peace with the Taita. Morris reported:

the people have had opportunity of giving expression to their feelings; Jones has seen many of them and has had opportunity of talking with them. We now have permission to move about freely over the greater part of the Western slope of the mountain.⁴⁵

In 1885 William Jones accompanied James Hannington on his fatal journey to Uganda. After Hannington's murder William Jones escaped death to tell of the journey and of the bishop's death. William Jones' journal is full of a penetrating account of the country through which they passed. For example, he wrote of the destruction caused by the famine then ravaging the country which he observed at Ulu (Ukambani).

All is saddening, the Jimba of 1883 is not the Jimba of 1885. All its beauty is gone. All its fine sugar canes are gone. Its fields are turned into wild jungle.

⁴⁴Price to Lang, May 25, 1885, G3 A5/05, C.M.S. Archives, London.

⁴⁵Morris to Price, March 7, 1888, G3 A5/05, C.M.S. Archives, London.

All is dreary and desolate.⁴⁶

But perhaps more educative was his account of the Kikuyu where the bishop's party stopped for over two weeks to buy food. Joseph Thomson had reported that the Kikuyu were treacherous without having tried to find out why they were so. William Jones, however, had a different story. He said:

The greedy Suahili last time they were here, as they were in great force took advantage of the poor Wakikuyu when they came down to sell their goods, caught them and made slaves of them. The Suahili traders followed this up by attacking the Wakikuyu in the forest homes, killing some and kidnapping others so that there is little wonder if they have lost faith in Suahili caravans.⁴⁷

The story of the C.M.S. work on the coast was almost wholly the achievement of the African catechist and pastor, William Jones, but, since he was serving under the European missionaries all the credit went to them, while any blame was fixed on him. Ishmael Seimler was stationary at Freretown and mainly engaged in pastoral work among the freed slaves. He did not write much nor did the other missionaries write much about him. After George David died in 1884 the story of the freed slaves and, in particular, that

⁴⁶ E. C. Dawson, James Hannington, First Bishop of East Equatorial Africa: A History of his Life and Work, 1847-1885 (London, 1887), p. 387.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 396.

of the Bombay Africans becomes the story of William Jones.

At this time trained white missionaries were very scarce and the possibility was remote that able men would come forth to work in so vast and humid an area like the whole of the Mombasa coast, amongst the Nyika, the Digo, not to mention the C.M.S. areas in central Tanganyika and the Lake Victoria region. It is surprising therefore that the C.M.S. lost the opportunity of elevating the able and genuine African Christians to higher clerical posts and of speeding up the work of the evangelization of the coast. The humid tropical climate dictated that they should do so, however.

From the beginning the policy of the C.M.S. was to work quickly towards self-supporting, self-propagating and self-governing native churches, as advocated by Henry Venn. By the early sixties the experiment in Sierra Leone had been a success and the first African Bishop, Samuel Crowther, a Sierra Leonian, was consecrated Bishop of the Niger Diocese in 1864.⁴⁸ This was the second Anglican Diocese in West Africa and the largest in the area. By the late seventies, however, notwithstanding the C.M.S. ' late beginning at Mombasa, there was

⁴⁸Webster, p. 5.

enough justification for the C.M.S. to speed up the process of Africanization in the church already adopted on the West coast of Africa. Moreover, the scarcity of men from England on the one hand, and the availability of spiritually-minded Bombay Africans on the other, only pointed towards the same goal already achieved so successfully in the Niger Diocese.

William S. Price's idea was that wherever there was a native congregation there should be a native pastor ordained to minister to it.⁴⁹ He held the view, already accepted at Salisbury Square, that only African pastors and ministers could superintend and propagate the gospel to their own people. At Freretown and Rabai George David, William Jones and Ishmael Seimler were already spiritually fitted to the call.

In 1876 J. A. Lamb came from Yoruba country to superintend the Mombasa mission when Price left.⁵⁰ With the West African experience, Lamb set forth to initiate steps for the fast realization of an African Bishop on the East Coast. On his arrival at Freretown, in 1876, he recommended that George David be given Deacon's orders.⁵¹ He found George David doing all the work of

⁴⁹ Price Report 1882, p. 6. ⁵⁰ Stock III, p. 89.

⁵¹ Lamb to Wright, November 4, 1876, C A5/017, C.M.S. Archives, London.

an ordained minister excepting the administration of the sacraments.⁵² Lamb, however, was not pleased that David had bought a considerable piece of ground adjoining the mission estate, whose material benefits, he believed, would distract him from devoting enough time to ministerial duties.⁵³

With a view to the realization of the East African bishopric and ministry, he began a Native Pastorate Fund.⁵⁴ In its inaugural meeting, August 30, 1876, it was agreed that each church member and candidate for church membership would contribute two pence per week toward the Native Pastorate Fund.⁵⁵ Moreover, they discussed the progress of the West African Church.⁵⁶ In 1877 the contribution towards the fund was £25.⁵⁷ All the leading Africans in the church who were Bombay Africans undoubtedly looked forward to the day when one of them, perhaps George David, like Samuel Crowther, on the Niger, would lead the church at Mombasa as their first bishop. In addition to this, and to prepare the African Christians for responsibility and leadership, Lamb

⁵²Ibid. ⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Lamb to Wright, August 6, 1876, C A5/017, C.M.S. Archives, London.

⁵⁵Ibid. ⁵⁶Ibid. ⁵⁷Ibid.

also made the first steps towards the formation of an African Church Council at Mombasa. He reported:

I want as soon as possible to start the system of leaders selecting, one by one, those who seem to be the leading men in the church and giving them a certain responsibility. In this way a Church Council is formed.⁵⁸

However, Lamb's grand ideas were short-lived, and the prospects of a Bishop Crowther that he saw in George David, and which he had written about so enthusiastically, vanished, to appear again only in the 1950's. His plans were bound to live as long as he stayed in Mombasa but he retired from the mission in 1878.⁵⁹ In 1879 conflict between the Bombay Africans and the European missionaries began to develop at Freretown.⁶⁰ William Price and Lamb, after him, worked side by side with them, and especially with their leaders, and the relations between them were friendly. But the change of personalities brought to Mombasa Europeans of different tempers. They began to look at Africans as inferior people, even the ones whom their predecessors had treated differently because of their education, and because they

⁵⁸ Lamb to Wright, October 9, 1876, C A5/017, C.M.S. Archives, London.

⁵⁹ Stock, III, p. 90.

⁶⁰ Price Report 1882, pp. 1-2.

were, above all, Christians. There was also at this same time a separation of duties with the establishment of the post of lay superintendent. Towards the end of 1879 until the rift between J. R. Streeter, A. Menzies and schoolmaster Handford on the one hand and the Bombay Africans on the other, there was increasing antagonism between them and the lay superintendent. It is very difficult to learn from his letters to Salisbury Square the cause for this rancour since his reports, as indeed almost all the reports of the other missionaries at this period, were very inconsistent in reporting about the Bombay Africans and the rest of the freed slaves. In 1879, for example, Streeter reported highly⁶¹ of them, but in 1880 he contradicted himself when he reported the Bombay Africans as slovenly, drunkards, lazy and liars.⁶² During this period it became general for the resident missionaries at Freretown to lump the Bombay Africans together into what the Bombay Africans themselves called a stumbling block, even without recognizing the services that George David, William Jones and Ishmael Seimler were giving to the mission. Thomas Smith, we are told, had superintended

⁶¹ Streeter to Hutchinson, January 29, 1879, C A5/027, C.M.S. Archives, London.

⁶² Streeter to Hutchinson, November 18, 1880, C A5/027, C.M.S. Archives, London.

every hut and the clearing of every piece of ground, yet he had been flogged and imprisoned unfairly.⁶³ The actions of the missionaries, therefore, drove the Bombay Africans further and further away from them, and solidified their consciousness of being a class distinct from the other freed slaves.

Their education put them in a privileged position in the mission stations. It was certainly their education that made them conscious of themselves as a class and that put a wide gap between them and the newly-freed slaves in the stations on the one hand and the Africans around them on the other. The Bombay Africans despised both, but they were not able to fit in the class of the white missionary immediately above theirs.

In Chapter I we saw that this was also the period when the same lay superintendent was excessively cruel. He arrested, flogged and imprisoned the Bombay Africans, as well as others, on the slightest provocation. In 1881 the conflict that had been seething since 1879⁶⁴ came into the open, and the Bombay Africans decided to appeal to Salisbury Square for redress. The im-

⁶³ A. Menzies to Wright, February 4, 1881, G3 A5/01, C. M. S. Archives, London.

⁶⁴ Price Report 1882, pp. 3-4.

mediate cause for the memorandum they issued was a letter that Menzies had written to Salisbury Square to report on the mission and which was printed in the Church Missionary Intelligencer without the omission of the controversial and offensive

references, as was always the case with most reports. Menzies had asked that such references be omitted. In his letter to Henry Wright, Menzies had referred to the Bombay Africans as "idle and slovenly in their habits and their women spending most of the time in gossiping. . . and sleeping. . . ." ⁶⁵ The Bombay Africans found, therefore, a cause for bringing to the open the antagonism that the white missionaries, Menzies and lay superintendent Streeter, had borne them since 1879. The Bombay Africans genuinely believed that they were being oppressed and victimized as a class. In a long memorandum to Salisbury Square, carrying the signatures of George David, Jonah Freeman, Tom Smith, Ishmael Seimler, James Ainsworth and Robert Keating, the Bombay Africans said:

We, the so-called Bombay Africans. . . call the attention of [the C.M.S.] to the subject we have entitled "The Bombay Africans Defence of their Character." We have long endured with the reports, of the European missionaries and teachers you send us. . . .

65

Menzies to Wright, February 4, 1881, G3 A5/01, C.M.S. Archives, London.

With the exception of the Reverend William Salt Price who always. . . reports home distinctly and separately of each department. . . describing what was done in each department. . . so that the two pictures, that is, the wheat and the tares growing together, were seen . . ., his successors rarely did so which often grieved us. . . . But things have come to such a high pitch [we] must speak for ourselves.

The Reverend Menzies wrote in his letter to you that the Bombay Africans are slovenly and are idle and slovenly in their habits, their women spend much of their time gossiping from house to house and sleeping when they should be working. Perhaps you might say this does not include the heads of the place. . ., if in describing the Bombay Africans [the missionaries] do not make a distinction between [the heads of the place] and the rest, would any description exclude the heads or other hopeful men and women? It is this [generalisation] which has given all the Bombay Africans a very bad name and a bad certificate throughout the world.

[Regarding the usefulness of the Bombay Africans], when the Reverend Mr. and Mrs. Lamb left Freretown in March 20, 1877. . . his work was carried on by Mr. Streeter and the Bombay Africans. The Makua and other mixed tribes candidates baptized were first taken in hand by David who began to teach them letters A B C. . . every Friday evening from eight to nine. . . . Mr. Streeter. . . changed it from night to morning and freed George David and placed Ishmael not only to teach them letters but texts and to say prayers. At the end of calling their names Mr. Ishmael is freed and used as interpreter of cases and Thomas Smith steps in. There is neither a plot of ground which has been cultivated, nor a hut which has been raised on the settlement of which Thomas Smith has not had a hand in.

The school which is conducted by Mr. Handford here has four Bombay Africans who daily labour with him willingly. In his absence the school is entirely conducted by them. The Sunday School which is conducted by Mr. Streeter has eight teachers, all Bombay Africans. As regards the work departments. . . they are carried by the Bombay Africans. . . .

There are thirty-six Bombay Africans on the Members Class who hitherto took the Lord's Supper and some of them declined taking the Lord's Supper as planned everywhere in the mission field. Mrs. Menzies asked the Bombay African women to help her in her Charity work which they did but received no credit. In short all the work which has been done here and which is being done now by the Europeans, is done through the Bombay Africans. For all this, why would the missionaries be ever murmuring against the Bombay Africans. [Why do they not] leave them and form or begin another station for themselves among the different tribes of the uncivilised Africans without the Bombay Africans. . . . It is plain to you from the many letters of your missionaries that the Bombay Africans are the stumbling block of the mission at Mombasa. The Bombay Africans therefore propose to you that if you want [them] to remain as your people remove them from [Rabai and Freretown] the two stations to another station and give them a God-fearing man as superintendent. If this should be heavy on your part in the way of expenses issue an order for them to leave the places without an exception, and thus the stumbling block will be removed out of the way and everything shall flourish.⁶⁶

At Freretown all the Bombay Africans had been counselling and holding meetings, and were in a state of near-rebellion for six weeks before they finally wrote the memorandum. "The catechists and others who wrote the letter, acting as leaders and instigators," wrote Menzies, "stirred the rest. . . so much so that we had to take very sharp and decided steps to bring them into sub-

⁶⁶ Bombay Africans' Memorandum to the Secretary, C.M.S. Salisbury Square, May 19, 1881, G3 A5/01, C.M.S. Archives, London. (Cited hereafter as Bombay Africans' Memorandum.)

jection."⁶⁷ The memorandum is certainly evidence of the spirit of independence that had been growing among them, which, Bishop Peel remarked, in 1899, "was evident in our leading African Christians."⁶⁸ The memorandum was, however, couched in the language characteristic of missionaries, and its weakness lay mostly in its submissive tone and language. The age of the African movement for independence in the church, and of the use of uncompromising language, lay in the distant years of the 1920's. It is evident from their memorandum that the Bombay Africans were not seeking independence from the C.M.S. for even when they suggested that they move from the mission station to find another station, they still wanted to remain under the C.M.S. and, consequently, requested that they be given a "God-fearing superintendent."⁶⁹ Their main concern, therefore, was to seek redress and recognition, and hence their appeal to Salisbury Square for justice and support. The memorandum antedates many such appeals from African political parties,

⁶⁷ Menzies to Stock, May 20, 1881, G3 A5/01, C.M.S. Archives, London.

⁶⁸ W. G. Peel to C. M. S., "Report on the Mombasa Mission," (not dated), 1900, G3 A5/016, C. M. S. Archives, London.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

over the heads of the colonial administrator on the spot, to the colonial office. The course of action with these early movements was always peaceful. Rebellion, however, came when such appeals failed to produce the intended results.

About the same time began the long and bitter campaign on the Niger Mission, launched by British missionaries to discredit the African clergy and African leadership in their own church. The campaign began about 1880 when European missionaries began to report, without any evidence, on the low morality of the Niger ministry and laity.⁷⁰ They directed their charges against the bishopric of Crowther, who had been bishop on the Niger since 1864. In the second half of the decade the campaign had gathered so much force that a number of white missionaries were sent out to the Niger diocese to make out stories that the diocese was rife with immorality and corruption from top to bottom, to prove that the Africans were not fit to take responsible positions. Widely current in Great Britain at this time were the racist ideas of social Darwinism and imperialism which publicised that the Africans were inferior to the Anglo-Saxons, an idea which was used as the justification of imperialism. The leaders of the campaign to purge the Niger Mission of its black

⁷⁰ Webster, pp. 7-8, passim.

bishop and clergy, G. W. Brookes and J. A. Robinson were racists and they undoubtedly found inspiration in social Darwinism.

It is therefore possible that the events on the East Coast parallel those of the Niger Mission though in a less dramatic way. What seems obvious, generally, is that in both cases the Europeans became increasingly antagonistic towards the educated Africans for reasons partly connected with their own inferiority and insecurity in the church, and partly with the larger and popularly held view of the superiority of their own race and the inferiority of the Africans. They therefore sought to discredit the educated Africans who were an immediate challenge to their own position.

The fate of the majority of the Bombay Africans in the C.M.S. mission stations hung in the balance in 1880-1881. The Consul General, Sir John Kirk, had levelled much of the blame for the difficulties that the missions had with the Arabs on the coast for, he said, they took a leading part in harbouring runaway slaves. The Consul was hardly aware that the Bombay Africans and particularly their leaders, William Jones and George David, were more concerned with the freedom of a large number of their fellow Africans than with obeying and maintaining the

Sultan's law that kept their fellow Africans permanently enslaved. In 1888, eight years later, William Jones chose to fight the Arabs to defend the runaway slaves to whom he had given refuge, and whom he had baptised at Rabai, rather than to give them up to their Arab masters. He was willing to hand them over only when William Mackenzie promised that they would be legally freed and the Arabs given compensation.

At Salisbury Square it seemed as if the loud voices of racists and of opponents of African church leadership who would later cause the disgrace of Bishop Crowther of the Niger Mission and with him African leadership, would triumph here, and that the purge that was to come to the Niger Mission, in 1890-1891, would be anticipated. Salisbury Square agreed to set up a Special Commission to inquire into the difficulties of the Mombasa Mission on the coast.⁷¹ Two problems were involved here. There was already the charge levelled against the missionaries at Mombasa by the Consul for usurping the authority of the Sultan, and also the charge of excess cruelty to the freed slaves and to the subjects of the Sultan over whom Streeter had no jurisdiction. There was also the question of the relationship between

⁷¹ Lang to Price, "Instructions to W. S. Price Proceeding to Freretown as Special Commissioner of C. M. S.," November 11, 1881, C A5/L2, C. M. S. Archives, London.

the missionaries and the Bombay Africans that had already reached the breaking point and led to the Bombay Africans' memorandum of 1881.

There were two independent inquiries set up at the same time: one, by the Consul General at Zanzibar, on request from the Sultan,⁷² and the other, by Salisbury Square. Salisbury Square chose William S. Price as their Special Commissioner.⁷³ He was instructed to inquire into the charges brought against the missionaries by the Arabs. But of more concern to the Bombay Africans, he was instructed to inquire into the administration of the mission and to recommend its future prospects. In particular, he was instructed to "consider whether in the interest of the community, it may not be necessary to remove, as soon as possible, from the mission stations, some of the Bombay Africans who appear to have given trouble."⁷⁴

But Price, who had lived with the Bombay Africans in India, 1860-1874, and in Africa, 1874-1876, was unlikely to make rash recommendations about them, nor was he likely to recom-

⁷² John Kirk to Granville, July 1, 1881, F. O. 541/49, P. R. O.

⁷³ Lang to Price, November 11, 1881, C A5/L2, C. M. S. Archives, London.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

mend the abandonment of Freretown and Rabai. He was so intimately connected with both of them that he would not have wanted the work he had laboured for to be abandoned.

William S. Price came out from England in December, 1881 and carried out his inquiry into the mission early in 1882. The missionaries at Mombasa did not like his appointment as a special commissioner. The Reverend Menzies, for example, did not extend the customary welcome they always extended to their fellow missionaries from England. Price noted: "The fact that Menzies knew of my coming a month ago and that three messengers came from him to Zanzibar after my arrival there without a line of welcome to me was not encouraging."⁷⁵ Price made his report to Salisbury Square in 1882. He agreed with the report presented by Frederick Holmwood that the lay superintendent, A. J. Streeter, was guilty.⁷⁶ He also agreed with the recommendation that all three missionaries at Freretown should be removed in the interests of the mission.⁷⁷

⁷⁵Price to Wingram, January 4, 1882, G3 A5/01, C. M. S. Archives, London.

⁷⁶Price Report 1882, pp. 2-3.

⁷⁷Ibid.

The major portion of his report dealt with the Mombasa Mission. Regarding the future prospects of the mission, he emphatically recommended that it be strengthened and that Freretown be made the center for all the C.M.S. missions in East Africa.⁷⁸ His recommendation for the increase of resident European missionaries at Mombasa was good, and he made it in good faith. But the increase of resident European missionaries would automatically lessen the opportunities likely to be opened to the leading Bombay Africans to rise into positions of responsibility in the mission. Price stressed and reiterated Venn's policy that wherever there is a native congregation a native pastor should be ordained to minister to it.⁷⁹ There was already a large African congregation at Freretown and Rabai and there was also David George, William Jones and Ishmael Seimler, all in charge of mission stations or sub-stations. Since they had many years of experience, Price felt that they should already have been ordained. In particular he blamed the C.M.S. for denying George David, then in charge of Kamlikeni station, the responsibility comensurate with the duties he was performing. Price stated emphatically:

⁷⁸Ibid., pp. 5-6.

⁷⁹Ibid.

They are spiritually minded, possess many gifts and qualifications, speak English and Swahili, and for more than fifteen years have worked faithfully, have the confidence and respect of Native Christians and Native Congregations should be under native pastors.⁸⁰

William Price felt that the creation of the post of lay superintendent had tended to separate the secular side of the mission from the more important spiritual aspect of it. The lay superintendent, he felt, had acted far too independently of the missionary in charge and had administered the mission like a military camp. The appointment of Commander Russells as first superintendent is coincidental though it is not without significance in this case. However, he felt it was this separation of duties that had caused the most trouble and so recommended that the post of lay superintendent be abolished.⁸¹ Instead, he urged for the appointment of a more senior person to be in charge of the Mombasa Mission. His recommendation was put into effect in 1884 when there was created the Bishopric of East Equatorial Africa with its center at Freretown.

With regard to the Bombay Africans in general, Price wrote, "the facts speak for themselves. It may well be asked where should we be now but for the valuable help which these men and women have given and are giving."⁸² In his report he

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 6.

⁸¹ Ibid., p p. 6-7.

⁸² Ibid.

included a table of the posts the Bombay Africans were holding in the mission to show that all the positions of trust were held by them. William Price was not, therefore, the one to recommend the removal of some of the Bombay Africans who, after all, he had brought up and taught in their early youth in Bombay; after 1874 he had worked side by side with them at Mombasa. He did not deny that there were lost sheep among them, but believed that if they had received fair treatment they would have been most cooperative. He was, however, to find that most of them had been forced out of Freretown and Rabai and had dispersed into Mombasa town and Zanzibar, and either lived in the towns or sought work in the mission stations of the U. M. C. A. and the White Fathers. At the U. M. C. A. Cathedral in Zanzibar, where he attended a Kiswahili service when enroute to Mombasa, he found that,

the most respectable part of (the congregation) was composed of Bombay African Christians. Most of them for one reason or another have been turned out of Freretown and found refuge and regular employment with Dr. Steere. He gladly avails himself of these men and women. It does seem a pity that those whom we have trained. . . should be lost to us in this way but I cannot think they have been dealt with wisely or fairly. It is very hard to force them into a position in which they have to choose between virtually giving up their Christianity or connecting themselves with a Mission with ritualistic practice of which they

have no sympathy.⁸³

William Jones, who had remained in the mission, later remarked that the missionaries at the time had depopulated the mission and forced freed slaves out of the mission to suit their own evil purposes. He sadly reported:

Of the 300 Makua who were landed at Freretown ten years ago. . . 100 have been driven away between the times of Streeter and Mr. Handford (school master at Rabai during the time of trouble with the Bombay Africans) and only eight of them now left and perhaps less. . . those who were sent away during Mr. Handford's time, it was just to suit his purposes. The God of Justice judged Mr. Handford because he was arrested in Zanzibar with the native woman he was trying to run away with. . . .⁸⁴

The Bombay Africans had migrated into the coastal towns of Mombasa and Zanzibar in 1881-1882; like the Sierra Leonians in the 1840's, they were too few to form viable Christian communities that would have any impact on the predominantly Muslim towns. Migration here was towards the towns where there were opportunities for work as artisans, domestic servants or retailers. There is no record of their migration into the tribal interior at this early date in their history. With regard to the

⁸³Price to Wingram, December 14, 1881, G3 A5/01, C. M. S. Archives, London.

⁸⁴Jones to Wingram, October 15, 1886, G3 A5/04, C. M. S. Archives, London.

Makua freed slaves of whom William Jones speaks, we can surmise that the fate of a large number of them was the same as that of the Bombay Africans. It is possible, however, that a few migrated into the interior, only to be absorbed in the tribal society.

But in one particular way the development of Freretown differed sharply from that of Sierra Leone and, therefore, put the Bombay Africans at a great disadvantage; moreover, it prefigured the failure of the Christian settlement from the very beginning. Unlike Sierra Leone, it was not declared a British colony in 1874. The permanance and the success of Sierra Leone as a freed slave colony was ensured in 1807 when it passed from the Sierra Leone Company to Crown rule, In 1853 the freed slaves were legally allowed to own land and property and above all they were to be sued and tried in British courts. The result of the establishment of Crown rule over Sierra Leone was that the freed slaves were to be accorded freedom and protection under the British Common Law and the Christian religion. As a Crown colony Sierra Leone was protected by the British government from external attack and internally the Crown ensured that the inhabitants were accorded freedom and given protection under the Crown government law.

The freed slave settlement at Mombasa was not placed under Crown rule from the beginning. The British government does not seem to have bothered to define the status of Freretown nor that of the freed slaves. The situation on the East Coast made it even more necessary that, if the settlement were to survive, it had to come into British hands and the status of freed slaves had to be clearly defined. Here on the East African coast, the freed slave settlement was to be planted in the middle of Muslim-administered coastal population, loosely falling under the sovereignty of the Sultan of Zanzibar. The territory immediate to the coastal area was governed by tribal authority. According to the existing law on the entire coast, slavery was recognized. The British government, however, does not seem to have seen the necessity to move away from their traditional policy of support for the laws of the Sultan. They were content to pay the missions regular visits and warships, it was understood, were to pay them demonstrative visits too. But the frequency with which the promise was kept depended upon the availability of transport to Mombasa and relief from pressure of work at Zanzibar and elsewhere. With respect to the European missionaries, as British citizens, they were accorded British protection accorded any other British citizen.

But the Consul clearly told the missionaries at Mombasa, as late as 1889, that the freed slaves were not British citizens and they were therefore not entitled to British protection, showing that the only recourse that any of them had against the Sultan or those in the interior was in the Arab or native courts.⁸⁵

By 1882 it was clear that George David was not to be the future Crowther of East Africa. In 1884 when there was created the Bishopric of East Equatorial Africa, with its center at Freretown,⁸⁶ James Hannington was consecrated as the first bishop.⁸⁷ By this time imperialism and the ideas of social Darwinism were at their peak, and the European race for the acquisition of territory in East Africa, as elsewhere in Africa, had begun pell-mell. The appointment of a British bishop ended any hopes that there would ever be a black bishop in East Africa. From then on it became clear that the Bombay Africans, who had remained on the stations in 1881, and any of the freed slaves who were training as teachers and evangelists were to be relegated to inferior positions in the church. The policy of the C. M. S. to emulate the Sierra Leone experiment, therefore,

⁸⁵ Downes Shaw to Lang, October 15, 1889, G3 A5/06, C. M. S. Archives, London.

⁸⁶ Dawson, p. 297. ⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 298.

did not prove to be successful.

Fortunately for the C. M. S., William Jones, Ishmael Seimler and George David did not leave the station in 1880-1882. The reason they chose not to do so is, of course, clear and understandable. They were holding posts of responsibility at Freretown and Rabai and it would certainly have been to their disadvantage to start life afresh in Zanzibar or elsewhere. The C. M. S., on their part, moved ahead and approved that the two catechists, William Jones and Ishmael Seimler, should be ordained deacons. George David had died the previous year, 1884.

Both Seimler and Jones were ordained deacons on Trinity Sunday, June, 1885. James Hannington, the first Bishop of East Equatorial Africa, had come out the same year. This was his first ordination, and Reverend W. E. Taylor was also admitted to Priests' Orders. "I can hardly tell you," wrote the bishop, "how greatly privileged I feel in thus having been permitted to ordain the first native ministers of our infant East African Church. The foundations of a native ministry have now been laid."⁸⁸ In 1896 Bishop Tucker admitted to deacons' orders James Deimler, the first of the Freretown freed slaves.⁸⁹ At Rabai and

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 363.

⁸⁹ Stock, III, p. 732.

Freretown, the number of Bombay Africans was reduced to a minimum. Their role still continued, as already seen, to be that of individuals. The addition of one of the freed slaves at Freretown into the hierarchy of deacons added the voice of the freed slaves to what had hitherto been that of the Bombay Africans. By the nineties there was more activity at the coast and expansion into the interior began, which meant, of course, more African teachers and catechists.

In the nineties mission employees of the two groups, the Bombay Africans who were left (there are no records of their number) and the freed slaves, coalesced into a single group and formed a Welfare Association known as the African Workers' Council, under James Deimler.⁹⁰ The first reference to the African Council appears in the minutes of 1901. It seems very likely that it was formed in the nineties when the catechists, teachers, readers and lay agents working for the mission felt a need to come together to press for their rights and to look after their own interests as a group. The C.M.S. at Mombasa seem to have begun to discourage the teaching of English to the young African agents, much against the wishes of all the African teachers and catechists. There was also the introduction of the native

⁹⁰ Minutes of the Executive Committee, Mombasa Mission, July 12, 1901, in file marked "Diocese of Mombasa--Cumulative Minutes," Bishop's Archives, C.M.S., Nairobi.

dress that Binns wrote about and Bishop Tucker pressed for and which the African workers of the C. M. S. resisted. There is enough reason, therefore, to believe that the African Workers' Council dates back much earlier than its first reference in the minutes of the Finance Committee of the Executive Council at Mombasa. In 1901 Reverend Burt, the Secretary of the C. M. S., Mombasa Mission, thought it began in the early nineties when the Africans felt the mission was interfering with their lawful rights by dictating what kind of clothes they might wear and other similar matters.⁹¹

The African Workers' Council was essentially a welfare association, interested primarily in maintaining and promoting the interests of its members, working for the C. M. S. Mombasa Mission as Christian agents in all sorts of capacities. The Workers' Council naturally drew its members from the freed slaves, both young and old. They were the only agents for the Mission, and when the Mission expanded into the highlands the first agents came from among the first Christians from the coast. As a welfare association, therefore, its interest would be to secure employment for the African Christians who were unemployed, to

⁹¹Ibid.

help the younger members to get used to the job and to help stay on and, perhaps above all, to press for better conditions of service.

The Workers' Council was faced with the urgent problem of securing higher wages for the agents in the late 1890's. These agents were already complaining that the wages the Mission paid were miserably low. By 1899 all peaceful pressure and negotiations for the Mission to increase their wages seemed to have failed and most of the agents resigned from the Mission. Bishop Peel found, on his arrival at Mombasa as the first holder of the newly-created Bishopric of Mombasa, that the two Africans in Priest Orders, William Jones and Ishmael Seimler, and the lay agents, had already resigned and that James Deimler and the remaining leading, licensed lay readers, had also sent in their resignations.⁹² The Executive Council of the C.M.S. was alarmed and quickly moved to increase the wages. All African priests were to receive sixty rupees per month, deacons fifty rupees, village pastors between forty and fifty rupees, senior catechists thirty, junior catechists twenty-five and evangelists between eighteen and

⁹²W. G. Peel to C. M. S., "Report on the Mombasa Mission," (not dated), 1900, G3 A5/016, C. M. S. Archives, London.

twenty rupees.⁹³

It was the solidarity of the African workers of the C.M.S. as a group that helped them to secure recognition and that made the Executive Committee aware of the importance and power of the Workers' Council. This solidarity proved strong enough to constitute a threat to the authority of the C.M.S. towards the turn of the century. The African Workers' Council had certainly fostered the spirit of independence which Bishop Peel witnessed among the leading African Christians in 1899. It appeared to be so strong that he felt the Africans were soon going to assert their independence.⁹⁴ Peel cautioned the C.M.S. to refrain from unduly asserting its authority over them as it would provoke them into action.

During the first year of the new century the authority of the Executive Committee of the C.M.S. seemed threatened by the Workers' Council and so commissioned its secretary, Reverend Burt, to enquire from Reverend James Deimler the purpose of the Workers' Council, its rules and members.⁹⁵ In the

⁹³ Harry Binns to Baylis, January 19, 1900, G3 A5/015, C.M.S. Archives, London.

⁹⁴ W. G. Peel to C.M.S., "Report on the Mombasa Mission," (not dated), 1900, G3 A5/016, C.M.S. Archives, London.

⁹⁵ Minutes of the Executive Committee, Mombasa Mission, July 12, 1901 in file marked "Diocese of Mombasa--Cumulative Minutes," Bishop's Archives, C.M.S., Nairobi.

previous meeting of the Executive Council, held in March, one of its more over-anxious members, J. E. Hamshire, who seemed to have had trouble with the members of the African Workers' Council, believed the Workers' Council was a great threat to the authority of the Mission. He excitedly moved that

the Executive Committee having had brought before them a case where certain agents and allegedly, while delaying to comply with the Committee's direction in a matter that they had referred to the African Workers' Council, the Committee desire, affectionately to point out to all the Society's Agents under them that no Association should be allowed by the Agents to come in as a third party between them individually and the Society under whom they serve. . . ⁹⁶

The other members of the Executive Committee did not feel that there was sufficient evidence for them to support the resolution although they passed it on to Salisbury Square at the request of Reverend Hamshire.⁹⁷ The Executive Committee, however, asked the Secretary to find out from James Deimler about the Council. James Deimler's response to the questions the Secretary of the Executive Committee, F. Burt, had asked him did not seem to satisfy the Executive Committee. In the Committee meeting of July 4, 1901 Burt reported that "he had written back to Mr. Deimler to write clearer answers to the questions asked by the Executive Committee."⁹⁸

⁹⁶ Ibid., March 19, 1901.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid., July 4, 1901.

In his first response to the Executive Committee's questions, James Deimler had said that the purpose of the Council was to help one another in their work, to consider and to report to the Bishop or Executive Committee what they thought was the best method of carrying on their work, and to encourage young beginners to persevere in their work. The Council forbade individual members to answer a difficult matter and no one was to resign before consultation with the Council whose decision was binding. Finally, the Council was open to pastors, catechists and readers.⁹⁹ These were the moderate, unambitious, objects of the welfare association. But the Executive Council, already suspicious that the Council had political aims, decided to request James Deimler to give fuller answers. Deimler did not respond to the second questioning from the Executive Council however.

Several interpretations are possible to explain the anxiety of the Executive Committee of the C. M. S. at Mombasa about the African Workers' Council. One explanation for this was evidently their desire to contain and channel any African movement into the direction they themselves wanted it to take, and such a direction must be one that worked in their favour and was positively

⁹⁹ J. Deimler to Burt, June 14, 1901, in closure in Minutes of Executive Committee, Mombasa Mission, July 4, 1901, Bishop's Archives, Nairobi.

Christian. Bishop Peel had advocated this line of approach in 1900 for he said that "this spirit of independence. . . in leading African Christians, if rightly and lovingly guided, will be of estimable importance in the near future."¹⁰⁰ C.M.S. missionaries were, therefore, to patronize and fraternize with any African movements or associations. Archdeacon Owen, years later, came to patronize the Karirondo Welfare Association in a manner which distinguished it from the politically militant Kikuyu Central Association, which was not patronized by European missionaries. The missionaries, therefore, wanted to redirect African political movements into purely welfare associations that would not challenge their own authority.

Another possible explanation might well be that they expected civil disobedience. They wanted, therefore, to forestall it by expelling the more militant leaders. The C.M.S. were less likely to adopt repression, for the bishop had previously warned them against it. Moreover, they could not do so without crippling their work since they would be faced with mass resignations and desertions by the African agents. Fear of repression was probably the reason why Deimler avoided giving the list of

¹⁰⁰ W. G. Peel to C. M. S., "Report on the Mombasa Mission," (not dated), 1900, G3 A5/016, C. M. S. Archives, London.

the members of the Council.

The African Workers' Council proved to be the last activity of any significant nature organized by the freed slaves. The end of the freed slaves as an important group in the C.M.S. mission stations had already come that year (1901) when the C.M.S. began work in the highlands. In 1904 William Jones died,¹⁰¹ and with his death ended the era of mission work among the freed slaves. They had not produced the grand results produced by their counterparts on the West Coast. However, they had made a significant contribution to the work of the C.M.S. in Kenya. The freed slaves themselves almost completely disappeared after 1907 when slavery was abolished in the East African Protectorate.

¹⁰¹ Stock, IV, p. 77.

CHAPTER IV

MISSIONARY EXPANSION

ACQUISITION OF LAND AND DISRUPTION

OF AFRICAN SOCIETY

1900-1914

The beginning of the century saw the passing of a phase in the history of Mombasa not only in administration but also in the missions, for the focus of activity moved from Mombasa to the highlands. The completion of the East African railroad in 1901 caused a pell-mell race among the missions, new and old, into hitherto unoccupied territory.¹ The railroad made transport across the Taro desert easier and safer. The fact that the missionaries, journeying to Uganda, did not see fit to start evangelical work in the commercial centers established by the Company serves only to emphasize that the missions, like the officials of the British East Africa Company, aimed only at reaching Buganda. William Price had urged the C. M. S. as early as 1888 to keep their eyes open and to make the best use of the road the com-

¹ Roland Oliver, The Missionary Factor in East Africa (London, 1952), p. 168.

pany was surveying. In 1889 Price established a mission station at Gulu, where the company had established a post.² However, the C.M.S. and the United Methodist Free Church did not live up to this. Protestant mission expansion to the highlands, therefore, followed behind the railway and the British administration.

Between 1900 and the end of the first decade mission stations were established across the highlands. The extensive territory, hitherto known as the diocese of East Equatorial Africa, was divided into two in 1899. Alfred Tucker retained the bishopric of Uganda, and George Peel became the new bishop of Mombasa diocese. Nyanza Province remained in the bishopric of Uganda, and the C.M.S. areas in Tanganyika in that of Mombasa. In the following year Bishop Peel visited the Kikuyu, and A. W. MacGregor transferred from Taveta to Fort Smith on October 13, 1900, whence he moved to found a permanent station at Kihuruko the following year.³ Following closely, C.M.S. stations were founded at Weithaga in 1903, Kahuhia in 1906,

² William Price to Lang, May 18, 1889, G3 A5/06, C.M.S. Archives, London.

³ C.M.S. Proceedings, 1900/01, p. 116.

Mahiga in 1908 and Embu in 1910.⁴ Effective work among the Luo in Nyanza Province began in 1906, and Archdeacon J. J. Willis, who later became the second bishop of Uganda (after Alfred Tucker), was posted there in 1906.⁵

The United Methodists moved to the highlands in 1910 and established their first station at Meru that year. Another newcomer, but preceding the C. M. S. by one year, was the Church of Scotland Mission. The C. S. M. moved from Kibwezi in 1898 and established themselves at Nairobi, west of the escarpment, that year.⁶ By the end of the decade the three major British protestant missions had established themselves on the highlands. More importantly they had all made the highlands the center of their missions. However, they were not the only missions that raced to the highlands at the beginning of the decade, following the opportunity offered by the railway. Other missions, such as the Roman Catholics, the Holy Ghost Mission and the Conso-

⁴ Oliver, pp. 169-170.

⁵ F. B. Welbourn and B. A. Ogot, A Place to Feel at Home (London, 1966), p. 21.

⁶ Kibwezi Jubilee Book, 1891-1948, typed manuscript in J. W. Arthur Papers, University of Edinburgh Library Archives, Edinburgh. (Cited hereafter as Arthur Papers, University of Edinburgh Archives.)

lata Mission, came also. The missionaries of the Holy Ghost established a mission station in Kiambu where they began to grow coffee. The Institute of Consolata sent out its first missionaries to Kenya in 1902 and started work in Kiambu, Fort Hall and Nyeri. The missionaries embarked on the establishment of a coffee plantation in Nyeri where they acquired 3,000 acres of land.⁷ From America came the missionaries of the Africa Inland Mission and those of the Gospel Missionary Society.⁸

On the coast this should have been a period of bustling activity for the pioneer period was long gone. But most missionaries confessed, during the turn of the century, that the work on the coast had been a failure. The United Methodists, years later, admitted that the coastal regions "chiefly because of malaria, cannot maintain a large population and that our missions there cannot be expected to grow much beyond its present population."⁹ In the same minutes they recommended

⁷ H. R. A. Philp, A New Day in Kenya (London, 1936), pp. 134-135.

⁸ Ibid., pp. 57, 149.

⁹ Unnumbered Minute Book of the Foreign Missionary Committee of the United Methodist Church (Marylebone Road, London), p. 376. (Cited hereafter as F.M.C. of U.M.C., London.) The United Methodist Free Church merges with the United Methodist Church in 1907.

that the center of work should henceforth be in the highlands.

The two oldest Protestant Missions had produced some results of consequence before the shift became complete. For one thing, the few missionaries among the Wanyika and Wataita, or on the Tana River working among the Wapokomo, had, by the 1890's, become well-known throughout the area and the tribes nearest had begun to take them into their confidence. There, they often acted as administrators and collectors of tax, serving as agents of the colonial administration. Sir Charles Eliot, the Commissioner for the East Africa Protectorate, was able to report, in 1902, that the administration had gained greatly from the missions. He particularly praised the efforts they had expended in spreading civilisation among the natives, and especially the assistance they had rendered in exhorting their congregations to pay the recently introduced hut tax.¹⁰

Mr. Moss Omeroid and Mr. John Consterdine served as interpreters and advisers to the administration and explained new orders to the Pokomo. Particularly significant was the fact that in 1897 Mr. Andersen, Sub-Commissioner, had promulgated three orders whose acceptance and understanding by the Pokomo

¹⁰ Charles Eliot to Landsdowne, April 18, 1903, F.O. 2/712, Public Records Office. (Cited hereafter as P.R.O.)

depended on the advice and approval of the missionaries there.¹¹ One order required that all traders on the Tana River be licensed, those concerned being required to deposit some money as a guarantee of good conduct. The second order directed that natives with food to dispose of had to sell it to the government to ensure that there was surplus food in case of famine; and the third order prohibited advances in cash made on growing crops or the supply of goods on credit to soldiers.¹² The three decrees were not controversial. In essence they aimed at protecting the Pokomo and the advice the missionaries gave them--to accept the decrees--did not provoke suspicion which a controversial decree, touching their interests, would have done.

Due to shortage of civil personnel, and partly because the missionary and the administrator did much the same thing in the initial period, it was not necessary for there to be a civil administrator in every district. The government, therefore, relied heavily on the missions.¹³ Eliot acknowledged this comity of interest between the government and the missions. He said:

the opening of a new mission station has seemed to me to be generally as efficacious for the extension

¹¹ Joseph Kirsop, Life of Robert Moss Ormeroid, Missionary to East Africa (London, 1901), p. 127.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Charles N. E. Eliot, The East African Protectorate (London, 1905), p. 241.

of European influence as the opening of a Government station and there are districts in East Africa, such as Teita and the lower Tana, in which European influence has hitherto been represented almost entirely by the missionaries, but which have made as great progress as the regions which have been taken in hand by Government officials.¹⁴

Sixteen years later District Commissioner Tate recommended that the C.S. M. take over Chuka on the Meru-Kikuyu boundary for similar reasons.¹⁵

The two Protestant Missions had stressed the agricultural side of their occupation as a means of training their converts and of supporting the missions. This was in line with what David Livingstone had advocated, namely, Christianity through capitalism, trade and white settlement. To this end the British Protestant Missions acquired large areas of land on which they raised commercial crops. On the coast the amount of land acquired varied from place to place. The United Methodists had embarked on commercial agriculture, on the coast, on an appreciable scale. They had 6,000 acres of land in the River Tana re-

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ H. R. Tate to Acting Chief Secretary, May 3, 1918, PC/CP/4/1/1, Kenya National Archives, Nairobi.

gion, 750 at Ribe and another 500 acres at Mazera.¹⁶ They grew rubber and coconuts on the three estates and also, at Mazeras, grew fruit for sale at Mombasa. By the turn of the century the Methodists had achieved a notable success in commercial farming and the District Commissioner of Malindi, R. Skene, reported in 1910 that the estate of the Methodists at Ribe was the best in the district. The mission had planted 22,000 rubber trees out of which it hoped to realise £1,000 during the year.

Next to the Methodists in commercial undertaking came the Church of Scotland Mission; although it was a late-comer to the coast its work was short-lived. In 1891 the East Africa Scottish Mission was established at Kibwezi, about 200 miles from Mombasa, on the initiative of the British East Africa Company.¹⁷ The directors of the company wanted the mission to be religious, educational, medical and industrial. Dr. James Stewart of Lovedale was transferred from Myasaland to found Kibwezi and to be the first superintendent of the East Africa

¹⁶ Kilifi Political Records, Vol. II, Annual Report 1910-1911, KFI/11, Kenya National Archives, Nairobi.

¹⁷ Kibwezi Jubilee Book 1891-1941, p. 7. Arthur Papers, University of Edinburgh Archives.

Scottish Mission. Land was acquired from Chief Kilundu of the Wakamba, and the British East Africa Company set aside 100 square miles to the mission on which to develop agriculture and industries.¹⁸ The mission was supposed to make a physical contribution to the Company by training Africans in industrial arts. Almost at once the mission began to train the Africans in brick making, carpentry and masonry, and also began experimenting with a coffee plantation on its huge estate. Very little evangelical work was achieved here and the mission became essentially a supply depot of porters for caravans en-route to Uganda.¹⁹

The Kibwezi Mission was an industrial mission of the Imperial British East Africa Company, and though imbued with humanitarianism, characteristic of William Mackinnon and the rest of the directors of the Company, it was a commercial undertaking per se. Due to harsh climatic conditions and to the scanty Akamba population, which was not apparent by 1891, Thomas Watson was commissioned to negotiate for the disposal of Kibwezi.²⁰ He was instructed to acquire a new site in Kikuyu

¹⁸Ibid., p. 8. ¹⁹Ibid., p. 9.

²⁰Thomas Watson to MacKinnon, January 27, 1899, MS 8016 "East Africa Scottish Mission," National Library of Scotland.

near the railway and the administration high up on the escarpment west of Nairobi. In 1900 the mission already acquired was placed under the direction of the Church of Scotland Foreign Mission Committee. Thomas Watson had reported in 1899 that he aimed to begin with as much land as possible, "600 acres, if the government charges only nominal rent since it is the best way of getting hold of the natives."²¹ Before the end of the decade Henry Scott from Blantyre, now superintendent of the Kikuyu Mission, had acquired 3,000 acres of land and had opened a second station at Tumutumu in 1908.²²

The C.M.S. did not embark on agricultural and industrial undertakings before the beginning of the twentieth century. During the second half of the 1890's the idea of developing industries in East Africa and Uganda on a commercial basis was mooted by the C.M.S. When Bishop Peel arrived in the protectorate to take over the diocese of Mombasa, he felt there was a great need for industrial enterprise. Industries, he believed, would give

²¹ Watson to the Secretary, October 25, 1899, MS 8016, "East Africa Scottish Mission," National Library of Scotland and Kibwezi Jubilee Book 1891-1941, p. 14. Arthur Papers, University of Edinburgh Archives.

²² J. W. Arthur to McLachlan, August 31, 1926, Arthur Papers, University of Edinburgh Archives.

his adherents work to do and also help the economy of the new colony. He wrote:

On my arrival in British East Africa at the close of 1899, a great field for industrial enterprise presented itself. The Freretown settlement of the C. M. S. . . . had many Christians who had nothing to look for beyond a little patch of ground in which to raise some beans and maize. In Rabai. . . there were numerous Christians similarly situated. These limitations engendered idleness, contributed to poverty and failed to draw the man into activities which are the health of a community.²³

Besides, the railway called for production and the stingy colonial administration continuously called for the country to contribute to the treasury. The bishop felt that this call was directed to the missions as well as to the new settlers.

The bishop appealed to the Industrial Aid Mission Society, in England, to begin industries in East Africa. The East African Industries Limited finally emerged in 1906 and established industries at Freretown, Dabinda and Maseno. At Mombasa the I. A. M. S. had 2,000 acres of land and at Maseno a 1,000 acre farm.²⁴ E. J. Harrison came out at the turn of the century as superintendent of the new company at Mombasa. Brick-making,

²³ Bishop W. G. Peel to Hatch, August 27, 1903, in file marked "Letters to 1913," Archbishop of East Africa Archives, Nairobi. (Cited hereafter as Bishop's Archives, Nairobi.)

²⁴ Ibid.

tile filing, castor oil, coconut and copra industries were got under way on the estate.²⁵ Commissioner Eliot and his commercial adviser, Marsden, had recommended establishing small industries to stave off the bishop's fear that they would be forced out by large capitalist-backed schemes. Peel hailed the initiation of the company as

a great encouragement to all who have industrial missions at heart, it being easy to discern the promise of material prosperity of converts and children of converts, while at the same time it is inspiring to know that these facilities of labour will be in connection with God-fearing white men who will seek to engage the workman's whole man in the glorifying of God. The industries now open in the Protectorate are many. Government is offering lots of 640 acres free in certain locations to those who will undertake the growing of cotton, vanilla, rubber, coffee, and, etc.²⁶

Protestant missions to Kenya adopted agriculture and industrial enterprises as one means of evangelizing the Africans. When commercial enterprises and agriculture became the basis for the development of the colony in the twentieth century, beginning in 1902, the missions too resorted to this as a source of self-support and economic self-sufficiency. Industrial arts and crafts as one means of spreading the gospel had been adopted by the mis-

²⁵ Bishop Peel to Hatch, July 17, 1902, in file marked "Letters to 1913," Bishop's Archives, Nairobi.

²⁶ Bishop Peel to Hatch, August 27, 1903, in file marked "Letters to 1913," Bishop's Archives, Nairobi.

sions before.

The missions, it has already been stated, had been allowed to settle and build on tribal land. It is true that they paid for the land in the form of cloth, wire, beads, etc. To the African Chiefs or elders such permission did not mean permanent cession of their land to the foreigner but only as a temporary residence amidst the tribe. Gradually, and more seriously, but without the sanction of the tribe, the missions extended their area to include more land which later amounted to thousands of acres. Typical of this mission zest for land were the C.M.S. "We must not just be content with small means," wrote W. S. McLachlan, secretary of the Foreign Missions Central Committee, "but perhaps you may be able to get. . . more land."²⁷ The United Methodist Church claimed, in 1910, that they had purchased about 6,000 acres of freehold land at Golbanti from the Galla in 1884,²⁸ with the approval of Governor Girouard.

The missionaries used the Crown Lands Ordinance that was issued in Kenya in 1902 to secure a permanent claim to the

²⁷W. S. McLachlan to Arthur, April 25, 1912, MS. 7559, National Library of Scotland.

²⁸River Tana District Political Records, Vol. II, DC/TRD 3/2.

land they had been given freely by the Africans. The Ordinance allowed for the alienation of land in Kenya for white settlement and laid down very liberal conditions under which land could be secured. The Act vested power for the alienation of land in the Commissioner for the Protectorate. Of particular alarm was that the Act provided for the Commissioner to grant leases of land containing native villages or settlements without specifically excluding the settlements.

The missionaries easily obtained certificates of occupation from the Commissioner. Further, all the missions joined in the race to extend the land they had already acquired to acquire more new estates in the highlands. Whether small or large estates, they put forward the claim that they were for mission purposes. The provision in the 1902 act, that areas of land containing native villages or settlements could be alienated without excluding them was particularly suited to the purposes of the missionaries. It gave them control of the Africans whom they could easily force to become Christians as a condition for settling on what had become mission land. There was also a labour force to develop the estate, labour which was made a condition for remaining on the land. So the Africans, who ceased to become owners of this land, reverted to tenants under the new masters.

They were faced with eviction unless they fulfilled conditions required of them as tenants.

In 1908 Dr. Henry Scott, Church of Scotland superintendent of the Kikuyu mission, entered into an agreement with 81 tenants, original owners of the mission estate, in the presence of the District Commissioner, Dagoretti. The tenants agreed to work for the mission for two months every year in return for subsistence on the estate. Dr. Scott further agreed to pay them four rupees²⁹ per month. In the following year he introduced the indentured system of labour on the estate. But when he further required his tenants to send their children to school, many of them chose to leave the mission estate rather than to succumb to this demand.³⁰

All the missions adopted similar procedures with variations to suit their particular needs. The United Methodist Society boasted in 1912 that it was not dependent on indentured labour for its estates, and expressed strong disapproval of every form of indentured labour.³¹ However, it urged missionaries to reach the

²⁹ Dagoretti Political Record Book, Vol. II, 1902-1912, p. 6. KBU/76, Kenya National Archives, Nairobi.

³⁰ Henry Scott to McLachlan, September 29, 1909, MS 8016, National Library of Scotland.

³¹ Unnumbered Minute Book, F.M.C. of U.M.C. London.

labourers on the estates. But in the early 1920's when they felt the pinch of the shortage of labour under extensive developments, they forced their tenants to work for them. At Jilore, where the C.M.S. had a 1,000 acres of land, the mission demanded that those cultivating the mission land had to pay a rental of between one and five shillings per year. And to induce pagans to become Christians the C.M.S. made special rates for the Christians on their land.³²

The Foreign Office and the protectorate government had not, by 1904, begun the policy of establishing native reserves. That year Donald Steward, who succeeded Charles Eliot as governor, was instructed by the Foreign Office to set up reserves for the Masai.³³ This move foreshadowed the policy of native reserves. In due course steps were taken to set aside reserves for the other tribes. In 1904 two reserves, one south of Ngong and the railway, the other north, on the Laikipia plains, were set aside for them. The intervening territory on Lake Naivasha along the railway was thrown open for European settlement.

³² Provincial Commissioner to Commissioner for Local Government, Lands and Settlement, March 18, 1913, Coast 2/549, Kenya National Archives, Nairobi.

³³ Vincent Harlow, E. M. Chilver and Alison Smith, History of East Africa, Vol. II (Oxford, 1965), Appendix I, pp. 676-678.

In 1909 Girouard recommended a system of defined, inalienable reserves, and some districts had already been set aside for the Nandi, Kikuyu and the tribes on the coast. The Land Titles Act of 1908 was enacted to cement it. Under this Act an attempt was made to adjudicate and record titles before allowing alienation.

Over on the highlands pressure from settlers was mounting for the alienation of land demarcated as Masai reserve on the Laikipia plains. The government on the spot, with the backing of the missions, seemed in favour of establishing one reserve for the Masai. The missions in the highlands believed that the concentration of the Masai and, for that matter, of any tribe into one reserve would facilitate their work among the tribe as it would give them large concentrations of people whom they could easily reach. Hitherto the missions had been unsuccessful among the Masai because the Masai were widely scattered over a very extensive area.

The policy of native reserves and, in consequence, the large and important one of demarcating special and distinct areas for the different races, began with the Masai. But once begun precedence was established for the restriction of the other tribes. This in short saw the beginning of the policy of segregation. However, it was one thing for the governor to proclaim native reserves,

and quite another to respect it for he could offer land in them for sale if he was satisfied it was no longer required by the natives. The missions did not keep out of the reserves. Indeed, if they had kept out of them they would not have gained any converts outside their mission estates.

The Protestant Missions fully supported the concentration of the Masai into one reserve, thus giving a blessing to the demands of the settlers and the pre-settler administration. They supported the policy from what they argued was a moral point of view. In April 1910, at the meeting held between the Masai and the government to prepare for the treaty of 1911, Dr. Henry Scott of the Church of Scotland, and C. E. Hurlburt of the African Inland Mission, were invited to represent the missions. Writing to Governor Girouard on May 1, immediately after the meeting in which they were a party to the pressure the government brought to bear upon the Masai to agree to move into one reserve, he said, "Hurlburt. . . holds the same view as I do. . . [that] it is in the best interests of the Masai tribe as a whole that they should be together in one reserve. . . ."³⁴ Bishop Peel put the moral Christian view even more sharply.

³⁴ Scott to Girouard, May 1, 1910, inclosure in Girouard to Secretary of State for Colonies, September 30, 1900, C. O. 533/90, P. R. O.

Like Scott, he supported the move, but on condition that the area was suited to them and that there was enough pastorage for their cattle.³⁵ To put the Masai into one reserve was, according to the bishop, "sound administration and a wise step in the moulding of these remarkable peoples afresh in a civilisation, Western and Christian but admitting of conservation of anything good in the end of keeping them from all the peculiar evils of their present system and customs."³⁶ The Vicar Apostolic of Zanzibar and British East Africa seized the opportunity to warn the governor that if the Masai were not confined to one reserve they would be a major source of trouble for the administration in the future. Echoing the Protestant Missions' view, he wrote, "you are only aware of the moral condition of the people if they are once brought together and firmly controlled by government."³⁷ Thus far it had been difficult to evangelize this pastoral tribe and so the missions believed that work among them would be

³⁵ Peel to Girouard, October 19, 1910, inclosure in Girouard to Secretary of State for Colonies, September 30, 1900, C.O. 533/90, P.R.O.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ S. Allegyer to Girouard, September 6, 1910, inclosure in Girouard to Secretary of State for Colonies, September 30, 1911, C.O. 533/90, P.R.O.

easier if they were restricted in one area.

It is unfortunate that the heads of the missions in Kenya should have so unanimously supported the initiation and execution of a policy of segregation and establishment of separate areas for the different races. Had they had the foresight to look beyond the narrow limits of evangelization and into the future of Kenya insofar as the relationship of the two races and their welfare was concerned, they would have advocated a wiser policy. It seems pertinent to believe that their philosophy, like that of their counterparts in Northern Rhodesia and Southern Africa, were the same.

By 1914 all of the missions had applied for and taken up land on the reserves on which to build a church and some, like the Church of Scotland and the Roman Catholics, had taken up huge areas of land for commercial purposes. Of concern to the Kikuyu whose reserves were being invaded was that the missions were taking the most fertile and cultivated land, often near the river. Bishop Peel said the administration was stirred by the way in which some missionaries were going into a district, getting land and building where the Chief and his people did not desire it. But he exonerated the C.M.S. for not having taken part in the rape: "CMS had not been guilty for forcing sites so

far as I know and I trust never will be."³⁸ As early as 1906 the protectorate administration moved to stop encroachment on native reserves. For example, that year they refused to allow the extension of the boundary of the Church of Scotland estates as far south as Kibwezi River to include the area demarcated as Akamba reserve.³⁹ Writing to Scott in 1909, Hobley instructed that in the event of the Church of Scotland selling their estate, they must reserve enough land for Chief Ndege and Kitabi and their 500 people, who were already living on the estates. Over on the Tana River region where the United Free Methodists held a 6,000 acre estate, the same situation arose. There were a number of Pokomo with villages and shambas settling on the estates. The governor, however, instructed the Methodists to reserve enough land for them.⁴⁰

In 1909 Frederick Jackson, the Governor of the Protectorate, sought a ruling from the Colonial Office to define the nature

³⁸ Bishop Peel to Baylis, November 14, 1914, G3 A5/019, C.M.S. Archives, London.

³⁹ Scott to Hobl y, May 29, 1909, DC/MKS/IOA/I/6, Kenya National Archives, Nairobi.

⁴⁰ Percy Girouard to Secretary of State for Colonies, August 14, 1911, C.O. 533/89, P.R.O.

and the kind of missions which should be granted land. The particular case in point was the application for land by the Mennonites which led him to ask the Colonial Office for "advise as to grant of land to so-called missions which [were] practically private enterprises."⁴¹ Lord Crewe, Under Secretary at the Colonial Office advised that "missions should be treated like ordinary bodies or individuals, in connection with application for grants of land, both as to the areas to be taken up and the terms on which the land is to be held and as to districts in which such grants may be made."⁴² The Colonial Office, whose approval was necessary for a land grant in the Protectorate was certainly very generous in meeting applications for land by missionary societies. Such grants of land had been generously offered in England and the older colonies and there was, therefore, a tradition from which they could not depart, even in the twentieth century.

By the end of the decade the Kenya government was alarmed by the multiplicity of missions applying for grants of land in the country, especially in the highlands. The government was also

⁴¹ Frederick Jackson to Secretary of State for Colonies, October 22, 1909, C.O. 533/62, P.R.O.

⁴² Lord Crewe to Jackson, November 8, 1909, C.O. 533/63, P.R.O.

alarmed by the chaos and confusion caused by catechists operating amongst the Africans, often against the will of the Chief and elders.⁴³ Governor Girourard submitted a list of missionary societies working in Kenya to the Colonial Office, and requested that no application from any other missionary society should be accepted without prior reference to him. He intimated that before approving any application for a missionary society to work in Kenya the society concerned should submit its financial position and its object in establishing missions in Kenya.⁴⁴

In the highlands of Kenya the struggle to gain converts between different missions and societies established within so short a distance from one another seemed explosive. Such competition was not in the best interests of the natives they were trying to convert. In the early days of their work on the coast the Protestant Missions had mutually divided the area among themselves and each agreed to keep within its own area. When they moved to the highlands they did the same. The increase of societies and missions, however, limited their area of expansion, and they found it difficult to keep to their agreement.

⁴³ Secretariat Circulars, No. 33, April 16, 1914, DC/MKS, Kenya National Archives, Nairobi.

⁴⁴ Girourard to Crewe, January 24, 1916, C. O. 533/71, P. R. O.

Moreover, the African catechists least knew what these agreements were about. The entrance of the Roman Catholics into the area further complicated the situation since they were not a party to the agreement between the Protestant Missions. The Roman Catholics argued, with justification, that if it was considered safe for a Protestant Mission to establish itself in any one district or reserve, they had an equal right to open their own station in the same area.

The Kenya government intervened to prevent unnecessary competition and a possible clash between the different missions and societies. As early as 1904 the government had imposed a three-mile limit between any two different missions.⁴⁵ By 1910 the competition was so explosive that the administration imposed a ten-mile distance between any two different missions or societies. The government further ruled that no catechist could work in any area without the consent of the elders of the area or of the local authority.⁴⁶

The Africans were surprised by the multiplicity of different sects. For one thing, they could not understand the cause

⁴⁵ Girouard to Harcourt, June 11, 1911, C.O. 533/88, P.R.O.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

for the antagonism and rancour between the different sects and societies. In African eyes they were doing the same thing, and doctrinal differences between missions did not mean much to them. If they believed that the administrators and missionaries were the same it was even more difficult for them to understand doctrinal differences between the missionary societies. The confusion such differences created and the length to which missionaries of one persuasion were prepared to go to eliminate another from any reserve mystified the Africans even more. It is no wonder then that the administration moved to curb this competition.

More importantly, the Protestant missionary societies tried to unite together in an attempt to offer to the Kikuyu a more uniform form of worship, prayer and baptism, in a United Church.

During the first decade of the new century the Protestant Missions began to be concerned about the effects on their converts of so many different sects within so close a distance of one another on the highlands. European settlements on the highlands inevitably necessitated movement of African farm-workers from the reserves to the farms and from farm to farm. The growth of Mombasa and Nairobi, with job opportunities for Africans, led to large migration from the reserves to the new towns. These mi-

grant African workers included among them a majority of Christians belonging to different denominations. All of them were little concerned about doctrinal differences between the different missions nor did such differences make any sense to them. Most African Christians therefore attended services and received communion in the nearest church. Those who had been excommunicated from one mission joined another without any difficulty and catechists and teachers resigned from one mission and easily found employment in another, often at a higher rate of pay. The recipient missions were only too glad to obtain the services of catechists and teachers and also to add to the number of their adherents. The C.M.S. gained many nominal converts at Mombasa, Nairobi and Kisumu for it was the first to establish itself in these towns.

In 1908 the Protestant Missions held their first conference at Kijabe, the American Inland Mission Station. From the conference emerged near-unanimous agreement to draw up a common educational system and code and common translation work.⁴⁷ This was followed up, the following year, by another conference. At both meetings J. J. Willis, the Bishop of Uganda, who had con-

⁴⁷J. J. Willis, "Reunion," undated typed manuscript, p. 1, Arthur Papers, University of Edinburgh.

sulted with Dr. Henry Scott of the C.S.M., presented his proposals for a United African Church.⁴⁸ In 1913 the Kikuyu Conference was held at C.S.M. Kikuyu station at which proposals for the Federation of the Protestant Missions in Kenya were discussed and referred to their Home Committees for approval.

Willis wrote:

The historic Conference at Kikuyu in 1913 set before the Church in East Africa a great ideal and a very difficult problem. The ideal was a single African Church, allowing for considerable varieties of organisation and worship, but united in fundamental faith, a united Church which would from the first be free from the trammels of denominational differences.⁴⁹

The United Church was not realised for, at the Conference, the Bishop of Zanzibar, Frank Weston, raised issues covering the common service of Communion in which the Bishops of Mombasa and Uganda had participated. The controversy which the Anglican Bishop raised was centered on the question of the Ministry and Inter-Communion. There was much publicity about the question both in East Africa and Great Britain. The narrowness of the Anglican Bishop, Weston, and of his home authority who could not see that such differences mattered to those who would ultimately have to control their own church, overruled the principle of federation. It is interesting to observe that those who were

⁴⁸ Ibid. ⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 1.

concerned, that is, the African Christians of Kenya, never participated in the discussions. The controversy was silenced by the First World War.

After the war the Protestant Missions met again, at Kikuyu, in 1918. Doctrinal differences between the Protestant Missions seemed to have hardened, though their united efforts in the war, as seen in the Mission Volunteer Corps, ought to have taught them a lesson. As before, the African Christians who had been even more united in the war, were not brought into the conference even as observers. Here again it was the historic differences within European Protestantism that prevented the formation of a United African Church in Kenya. "It became clear," wrote Willis, "that Federation was impracticable, and we fell back on an Alliance as being less rigid than a formal Federation."⁵⁰ Four missionary societies formed the alliance: the Church of Scotland Mission, the Methodist Mission, The Church Missionary Society and the African Inland Mission, an inter-denominational mission. The Alliance appointed an Executive Committee known as the Representative Council.

⁵⁰ Ibid., pp. 1-2. The Bishop of Zanzibar's viewpoint is discussed by himself; see Frank Weston, The Case Against Kikuyu: A Study in Vital Principles (London, 1914).

The twenties opened before the different Protestant Missions had resolved the question of their differences which were, in themselves, unimportant to the African Christians. The Africans, however, entered the twenties with the differences and when they took over from the white missionaries in the 1950's they inherited the European doctrinal differences as well. The Alliance, however, became a voice of the four Protestant Missions on the politics and the affairs of the country.

On the eve of the First World War the numbers of Christians gained by the British Protestant Missions on the highlands, not mentioning the others, could not justify their existence there. At Mombasa their presence, during most of the latter half of the nineteenth century could be accounted for by the existence of freed slaves. But by the 1890's slave trading had been abolished; the sale and purchase of slaves and all forms of slave-trading were absolutely prohibited and no one born after January 1, 1890 could be a slave. So far there had been very little progress amongst the Nyika, not to mention the Arab population at Mombasa. For example, reference has been made to 700-800 adherents reported at Rabai, but with a minority of Warabai among them. The majority of them were ex-slaves, or their descendants. Binns, who had worked on the coast for more than thirty years, summed it up thusly:

I don't mean to say that there are not true Christians, thank God, there are many, certainly several whom we know to be followers of the Lord Jesus, but these are hardly, I should think, 1% of those who have been taught. Of the freed slaves' descendants, there are very few indeed of those who were brought over from India or descendants, fewer still. Of the descendants of the original Giriama country, there are few teaching in our schools or working as agents in other ways.⁵¹

By 1910 the C.M.S. stations at Mombasa reported over 1,400 baptised Christians. But it is not far wrong to surmise that the baptism, as was the case at Rabai, had been attained through the excess zeal of the missionaries.

Translational work and the study of tribal tongues apart, the C.M.S. admitted that the most outstanding feature of their work at Mombasa was its cathedral, which was dedicated in 1905, and had been built as a memorial to the first two bishops of East Equatorial Africa, James Hannington and Henry Parker, and the Secretary of C.M.S., Henry Wright. Eugene Stock said it was an imposing structure, with a strikingly Oriental effect.⁵² There were similar cathedrals in Uganda, Zanzibar and Likoma in Nyasaland. The Likoma and Uganda cathedrals were, however, built by native Christians who could justify the existence

⁵¹ C.M.S. Proceedings, 1906/1907, p. 243.

⁵² Eugene Stock, History of the Church Missionary Society, 4 vols. (London, 1899-1916), Vol. IV, p. 77.

of the imposing superstructures. But the number of Christians gained by the C.M.S. at Mombasa or in the outlying areas was so small that it could not justify the existence of the cathedral.

On the highlands church buildings and estates were more the sign of the presence of the missionaries before the First World War than of the African converts they had gained. The C.M.S. admitted, in 1908, that their native Christians were comparatively few; about half of them were concentrated in Nairobi. But even here a majority had come from the coast with the railway. By the end of the decade the Church of Scotland frankly admitted that the pride of the mission was in the estate rather than in the number of Christians gained. They hoped that their estate would meet the expenses of running Kikuyu Mission and would enable them to establish a chain of stations towards Mount Kenya: the station was to be self-supporting where possible by agricultural or industrial work, but where that was not possible it was to be supported from Kikuyu, with finances from the estate.

This was, however, a transitional period. The missions were able to establish firm bases in the highlands in which lived their converts, and out of which the gospel would spread once this transitional period was over. The bases became, in essence,

mission houses and centers of Western civilization and Christianity. For the whole of this period the mission houses appealed only to the young people while the older generation opposed the houses bitterly. The young people had nothing to lose from living in the missions. The older generation, parents, chiefs and elders, saw them as a real threat to their authority with and influence over the younger generation, since the missions induced the young ones to go and live in the mission houses. This was also to bring about the disruption of the tribe since the missions began to demand that those living in their houses must give up tribal customs and traditions.

Between 1900 and 1914 the C.S.M. and the C.M.S. repeatedly reported opposition to their work and to the opening of new stations from Kikuyu elders. In 1913 the C.S.M. reported that the main feature of the previous year was marked by a settled opposition in the form of resistance to the gospel and rejection of medical treatment.⁵³ In 1914 the Kikuyu opposed the opening of out-stations. The C.M.S. faced formidable opposition from Chief Karuri and the elders of Kabeti and Karathimo who openly prohibited their people from having any contact with

⁵³ Kikuyu News, July-August, 1913, p.21.

the C.M.S. mission station.⁵⁴ At Ndia, in the Embu district, the opposition of the elders to the missions assumed even greater significance. Alarmed at the increasing number of their people visiting Embu Mission for medical treatment, the chiefs and head men assembled together and issued an order that none of their people were to visit the hospital without permission. The chiefs feared that these people would settle there. By 1912 government officers working around Kikuyu were complaining that missionaries had become a source of constant trouble because they had enticed young girls and young women to abandon their homes and live in the mission stations.⁵⁵

From the very beginning the British Protestant Missions had been a grave social problem to the African society in Kenya. In trying to convert the African to their own religion, the missionaries demanded that their converts throw away their beliefs, customs and traditions and accept, without question or qualification, a completely new way of life, social code and morals. In short, they demanded a revolution: "a rejection of those very things that bound the tribe together from kings and chiefs down to the

⁵⁴C.M.S. Proceedings, 1911/1912, p.48.

⁵⁵Handing over report, Dagoretti 1912/1913, KBU/76, p.15.

lowest and most insignificant individual, (into) one organic whole controlled by an iron bound code of duties."⁵⁶ The missionaries failed miserably to adjust their religion to the African milieu but proudly believed, for example, that their own form of marriage and burial, their theological approach, their narrow concept of a family and individualism was best for the Kikuyu, Akamba, Teita Nyika, Pokomo and Moslem Swahili. It is no wonder then that they began to legislate for their converts from their Olympian western palaces in the midst of Africa, and regarded everything African as, at best, heathen. By 1915 the Church of Scotland had drawn up a code of rules against sins as a condition for baptism.⁵⁷ The C.M.S. had ruled that its agents would be dismissed from their services with the mission if they took part in native dancing.⁵⁸

But perhaps the most serious problem was their interference with African customary marriage system. It was difficult for the Victorian-Edwardian missionaries to understand that no

⁵⁶ Jomo Kenyatta, Facing Mount Kenya (London, 1938), p. 271.

⁵⁷ McLachlan to Arthur, November 16, 1916, MS 7572, National Library of Scotland.

⁵⁸ Minutes of the British East Africa Mission, C.M.S. in file marked "Diocese of Mombasa--Cumulative Minutes," Bishop's Archives, Nairobi.

marriage in any African community could be solemnised without its component parts, namely, dancing and drinking. There was no better form through which they could express their joy other than in dancing which was always accompanied by drinking. So, when the missions required their converts to refrain from dancing and drinking they were, in fact, eroding marriage, initiation and circumcision ceremonies. The missionaries moreover failed to see anything good in polygamy, even though this was ingrained in the tribal social fabric. Besides, polygamy carried prestige and was of great social and economic significance in African society. The more male children a family had the stronger the family and the tribe became. As for female children, Kenyatta said: "it was necessary to have a number of female children who could also render assistance by cultivating the land and looking after the general welfare of the tribe, while the men were fighting to defend their homesteads. Furthermore, the society cannot do without them for they are the salt of the earth. . . ."⁵⁹ Only polygamy could meet all these demands. So when the missionaries were demanding that their adherents cast away their wives, they were demanding a complete revolution, and an impossibility. But, more importantly, had the

⁵⁹ Kenyatta, p.175.

African men done so, it would have meant shunning the responsibility they bore to their wives, children, community and the whole tribe. They would have lost their prestige, economy and wealth. This they could not do and still belong to the tribe.

For the unmarried converts the missionaries ensured that the boys married Christian girls and vice versa. In the early days of their work at Mombasa the C.M.S. did not find it difficult to arrange marriage for the single freed slaves, for the missionaries posed as their parents and so placed themselves in a position of tribal authority to chose wives and husbands for those under their care. In the twentieth century the missionaries could always ensure that this was so by arranging marriages among those resident on the mission. Residence in mission stations was, therefore, one way through which the white missionaries could enforce monogamy, for they ensured that their adult converts had Christian wives from the mission house. Those that could not obey the wishes of the missionaries were thrown out of the mission houses. It is no wonder then that African parents refused to allow their children to live in the mission stations, and disowned those who were enticed away from their homes by the missions.

It is perhaps not necessary to narrate here that residents

in the mission stations were subject to a discipline equal only to, if not surpassing, that found in military camps. In Mombasa we have seen how the missionaries practised brutality so that they might save the souls of their converts. The same process was repeated in the highlands but with less brutality. The kiboko was used sparingly in the twentieth century since the British official then supervising civil action made its use, by the missions, an offence. In the late nineties the C.M.S. at Mombasa lamented the passing to the civil courts of their power to punish their converts. They admitted that all they could do was to try to restrain their converts from sin through moral persuasion.⁶⁰ Adultery, premarital intercourse, lying, even though through fear, drunkenness and the mixing of the sexes, were strictly forbidden and offenders excommunicated or punished.

At Mombasa the two old Protestant Missions had tried in vain to prevent toddy making and palm wine tapping, in the eighties and nineties. They had even tried to introduce tea-drinking instead. But the Africans were quick to discover that this could not fulfill the social function for which their own beer was brewed. On the highlands they also tried, with no success, to forbid their converts' drinking beer. The American Inland Mission had, by 1914,

⁶⁰ Extracts, Annual Letters, C.M.S., 1895, pp. 203-204.

ruled that total abstinence was a necessary condition for baptism, and John Arthur, agreeing mistakenly with C. E. Hurlburt that beer-drinking among the Kikuyu was synonymous with drunkenness, sought permission from the Church of Scotland Central Committee to require total abstinence as a condition for baptism.⁶¹ Since no such rule existed in the constitution of the Church of Scotland he could not do so without interfering with the constitution. The C.S.M. therefore circumvented the constitution by placing drunkenness along with the list of sins which John Arthur had proscribed as a bar to baptism. This shows that the missionaries were prepared to go outside the boundaries of their Home Committees and Constitutions, or to evade them, to root out what they considered to be evil customs among the Africans. Most of the Africans considered it a joke since such customs were ingrained in the whole fabric of the tribe. They refused to abide by the rules, even when the civil authority at times joined the missions to curtail drunkenness, not because they felt it was necessary for salvation, but because they considered that it reduced the efficiency of the tribes' labour force.

⁶¹ Mclachlan to Arthur, November 16, 1916, MS 7572, National Library of Scotland.

It is difficult to assess the impact of the British Protestant Missions and all missions in general on the villages and reserves since they were so violently opposed by the older generation. This opposition to the social forces of Christianity is a real measure of the strength of tribal culture. The elders and the older generation defended the tribe, and tried to prevent the social disintegration which they rightly believed would result if they allowed the missionaries to prevail. To be sure the elders had a vested interest in doing so because the missionaries threatened their own authority over the younger generation, but we need not over-emphasize this. It was not only because the missionaries attacked beer-drinking and dancing that the old and wise men of the tribe opposed them. Rather, it was because they were attacking the foundation of the tribe. Reverend Harry Leakey wrote:

it was easy to collect large audiences in those days. They could come in bands to a service as sight seeing to a show. They used to call the mission service by the same name as their musical dancers. But when at last it began to dawn upon them that more than mere listening was expected of them and that a change of life, which must of necessity mean a revolution in national customs was looked for by the missionary they became violently opposed to his teaching.⁶²

⁶²Harry Leakey to Baylis, May 17, 1910, G3 A5/-18, C.M.S. Archives, London.

In 1910 the missions and the British protectorate officials became concerned about the social disruption of the converts. It became quite clear to the missionaries that while they were condemning all the social and cultural values of the African tribes in the Protectorate as evil and heathen, they had not been able to provide alternatives acceptable and understandable to their few converts. It was not the discipline and immoral behaviour of the unconfirmed, as reported by Binns,⁶³ that the C.M.S. were worried and concerned about, but that of the converts who, displaced from their tribal authority and codes and without firm footing in the ways of the white missionaries and western civilization, had become a social problem. The Bishop of Mombasa moved to remedy this, at least among the C.M.S. adherents. The C.M.S. conference meeting at Mombasa in 1912 responded and set up a small committee composed of the Bishop, Archdeacon Binns and George Wright, to approach the government to press for the formation of Christian Councils of Elders in Christian settlements, to exercise tribal laws similar to those exercised by kiamas (native tribunals) in the tribe.⁶⁴

⁶³ Binns to Provincial Commissioner, July 31, 1912, in-closure in Tate to Acting Chief Secretary, August 5, 1912, Coast 64/252, Kenya National Archives, Nairobi.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

In perhaps quite a different way, the C. M. S. was most probably responding to the Native Tribunals Rules of 1911 in which the government established councils of elders in accordance with traditional customs. It must be said at once that all the tribes of the Protectorate, and in this case the Pokomo, Nyika, Akamba, Taita, and Kikuyu, had traditional councils of elders who dispensed tribal laws and regulations. The Protectorate government did not, therefore, set up a novel tribal administrative authority. But in 1907 they, in their own colonial fashion, had legalized what John Middleton mistakenly calls "informal" councils of elders. The change was not so much in the tribunals themselves, rather it was in its personnel since, from now on, the government made sure that it appointed those who would cooperate with them.

The C. M. S., perturbed at the social disintegration and lack of moral or civil codes among their converts, which the mission had brought about, sought therefore a duplication of the same councils in their own Christian settlements. In other words, they were asking the government to set up reserves for Christian converts with Christian councils of elders similar to those formed and recognized by the government in the native reserves, to enforce tribal law as prevailing in the nearest tribe and punishing

offenders by fining them or otherwise as they would have been punished had they remained heathen. The C.M.S. singled out one particular difficulty to drive home its case, which was most probably the concern of all missions. Binns remarked:

It is felt by all of us that there is something wanting in our organization, and the question has been brought before on many times as concerning our young people who fall into the sin of fornication, and it has often been said that amongst the heathen, for instance the Wagiryama, if a young fellow seduces a girl he is brought before the elders of the tribe and has to pay a fine amounting in some cases to the dowry which would have to be paid for the girl if she were married, whereas if a lad who professes Christianity is guilty of the same sin he is not punished at all, consequently, there is among those who profess Christianity a proportionately much larger number who are guilty in this way as there is not the same amount of restraint as amongst the heathen.⁶⁵

The government had, in the first half of the decade, become aware of the social problems of the converts. Governor Girouard wanted to set up inalienable native reserves in which chiefs and headmen would have definite powers and positions of authority within the tribe. The missionaries, on the other hand, demanded that these chiefs and elders should be denied authority over African Christian converts, hitherto members of the tribe, and that there should be set up distinct local administrative units especial-

⁶⁵Ibid.

ly for their converts.⁶⁶ Governor Girouard was unwilling to see Christian converts put into their own reserves, within the native reserves, and severed from their chiefs and headmen. But the general problem and position of the converts, as shown by the C.M.S. and government concern, demanded a general review and thorough examination. In 1912 the governor set up a Native Converts Committee to consider the position of the converts in the Kikuyu reserves. The Committee was composed of the Provincial Commissioner for Kenya Province, C. R. W. Tate; Provincial Commissioner for Ukamba, C. W. Hobley; District Commissioner, Fort Hall, G. A. Northcote; and Assistant District Commissioner, Kiambu, A. D. Dundas.⁶⁷

The Native Converts Committee held discussions with chiefs Kinyanjui, Matato, Mimi, Njiri and elders.⁶⁸ Representatives of the converts were drawn from both Protestant and Roman Catholic missions around Kikuyuland, but with a majority from missions

⁶⁶ Bishop Peel to Baylis, November 14, 1910, G3 A5/018, C.M.S. Archives, London.

⁶⁷ Chief Secretary to Tate, March 14, 1912, Coast 64/252, Kenya National Archives, Nairobi.

⁶⁸ Hobley to Chief Secretary, "Precis of a Meeting held at Kiambu," April 25 & 26, 1912, Coast 64/252, Kenya National Archives.

centered in Kyambu. There were five from the Church of Scotland Mission, Kyambu, six from the French Mission, Kyambu, and two from the Italian Mission, Fort Hall.⁶⁹ The government deliberately excluded representatives of the white missionaries from the discussions due to the fear that they might prejudice the deliberations. The Committee held the view that the question of the position of the converts in the native reserves was solely theirs, perhaps in consultation with their parents and the government. Hobley noted "one must not lose sight of the fact that the function of the missions is only a spiritual one and that they should not be allowed in any way to interfere with tribal organization, laws of inheritance, etc."⁷⁰

The discussions were centered around the touchy problems of land tenure, marriage, inheritance and tribal authority (kiamau). From the deliberations emerged, above all, and much to the disappointment of the missionaries, unanimity among all the converts in their desire to retain identity with the Kikuyu tribe and to abide once again by the Kikuyu laws, customs and traditions. The converts' loud cry "We wish to live with our fathers and not with the missionaries,"⁷¹ would seem to indicate that the missionaries had made very little impact on the converts. For the time

⁶⁹Ibid.

⁷⁰Ibid.

⁷¹Ibid.

being, the converts rejected, unequivocally, the wish of the missionaries that they live a life apart and detached from that of the traditional Kikuyu. They refused to be placed, as the missionaries were asking, under their own Christian Councils of Elders, but wanted to be under the jurisdiction of the kiamas. They also refused to have any system of marriage other than that of the Kikuyu, and expressed the wish to abide by all the arrangements relating to courtship although the missionaries mistook the pre-marriage arrangements and the customary exchange of presents as "dowry."⁷² Call it what they would, their converts would not depart from it.

Missionaries were presumptuous enough to claim to be guardians of children and widows of deceased converts, on the ground that they had arranged and paid dowry for the converts to fulfill tribal obligations before they got married.⁷³ So, they entertained the hope that the widows and children would remain on the mission and would not have to pass into the hands of their pagan relatives, according to tribal custom. They had even hoped to control and have a share of any of their moveable property. The converts, on their part, denounced and rejected at

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

once any such claims by the missions, and quickly declared their desire to be inherited according to Kikuyu customs and traditions. In so doing the converts were, by implication, saying that their hearts, souls and bodies were with the tribe and not with the missionaries. Thus the missionaries had not succeeded in making them Christians and, as they had hoped, different from any genuine Kikuyu. This was the case with the tribe in Kenya.

The missions failed to provide their converts with a lasting tenure which would have served as a great inducement for them to stay on the mission, even when they wavered with regard to Christianity. Lasting land tenure on the mission estates was of particular importance to the converts since their residence there was considered, by the chiefs and Kikuyu elders, to be a bar to taking and owning land again in the reserves. Converts therefore invariably became landless once they left the mission as they could not retain their plots on the mission estates once they were outside. Such a position posed a serious dilemma, not only for them but also for the administration. Once the converts were given a choice, they preferred to remain on the reserve since owning land there did not entail the added demands made upon them on the mission land. Those whose land passed to the mission were in an even more serious position. Phillip Karanja,

representing the converts, said:

that when a convert leaves the mission he is not allowed to retain his shamba on the mission land. He stated that they had had nowhere to go to as many of the elders would not let them have land on the reserve. They are debarred from dancing in at ngomas and participating in other tribal observances.⁷⁴

⁷⁴Ibid.

CHAPTER V

THE BRITISH PROTESTANT MISSIONS AND THE EDUCATION OF THE AFRICANS

We saw in the preceding chapter that the missionaries had by 1914 established themselves on the highlands. They had gathered their adherents into mission stations, as they had done on the coast, in the nineteenth century, and this characterized their work during this period. But there was a remarkable difference in the nature of their work in the two areas. On the coast almost all of their adherents and converts came from freed slaves. And by the turn of the century, when there was shift in emphasis from the coast to the highlands, the C.M.S. and the U.F.M.C. had made very little progress with the free tribes outside the mission stations. This is, however, not to suggest that they did not get any converts outside the freed slaves or their descendants, for quite a number of Nyika, running away from starvation during the disastrous famines of the eighties and nineties, sought refuge and food in the mission stations where, in the case of adults, they preferred to become nominal Christians than to starve to death. For the children, rescued from starvation, there was no choice.

They were in much the same situation as those rescued from the slave trade or of those living in the mission stations.

On the highlands, however, there were no freed slaves or their children, only free Kikuyu and Akamba who did not need any special care or particular attention from the missionaries. Here the missionaries resorted to a different form of force to gain converts: while it is true there were no freed slaves, yet, with the introduction of the land laws and regulations by the administration, many Africans were dispossessed of their land and thereby reduced to the status of freed slaves. As was the case with the Church of Scotland Mission, which acquired 3,000 acres of land, until then part of Munyua Githaca,¹ the missions acquired land freely or paid a nominal fee of 2-3/4 pence per acre, and forced the tenants, hitherto original owners of the land, to become Christians and to send their children to school and to labour on the estates. In thus behaving like settlers in acquiring land, they, by implication, gave their blessing to the dispossession of the African from his land. The alternative was always eviction from the missions. This also became common with the

¹ J. W. Arthur to McLachland; August 31, 1926, in J. W. Arthur Papers, University of Edinburgh Library Archives, Edinburgh. (Cited hereafter as Arthur Papers, University of Edinburgh Archives.)

C. M. S. and the Roman Catholic Mission. Once landless, either as a result of his land passing over into the hands of settlers or of missionaries, the African was no better off than a freed slave. It was under this condition that they were forced to become converts and to send their children to school in order to continue living on the mission.

In every station, whether at Mombasa from the early days, or in the highlands, during the twentieth century, the common features of a mission station were the church, often of thatch or stone, the school, either under a tree or a flimsy structure, and the shamba. The church was, of course, the central core of any mission station and the school was a necessary part of the evangelization process.

The pioneer missionaries to the coast, and later on, to the highlands, like those to Nigeria, saw education as a vital weapon. The missions, therefore, undertook the schooling of their converts because it was necessary to teach Africans to read the Bible and the catechisms.² Norman Leys characterized it thus:

When a mission begins work in a new district in Africa it begins with a school. . . . The primary object of the education given is to enable each person to learn for himself and to understand the record, the character

²Melville J. Herskovits, The Human Factor in Changing Africa (London, 1926), p. 206.

and the teaching of Jesus and the chief doctrines of historical Christianity.³

But of greater importance was that the missionaries seriously believed that the evangelization of Africa, and in this case the interior of Kenya, would inevitably be carried on by the Africans themselves. It was therefore necessary that those who passed through the central stations and schools should be literate in the Bible, since it was incumbent upon them to spread their influence and gospel among the rest. Writing as recently as 1956, but in effect reiterating Henry Venn's policy, Roland Oliver said:

As Livingstone always foretold, the evangelization of Africa could hardly begin until it was in the hands of native Africans as well as foreign missionaries. The fact that is so very little realized in Europe is that it is seldom indeed the white missionary who is in direct contact with the African pagan. In the beginning he was. He had to be. There was no one else. But almost his first task was to find and train the people who would take his place in the front line of the advance; the twelve who would ultimately succeed him; the twelve who, meanwhile, could man a dozen stations while he himself could occupy no more than one.⁴

Henry Parker, the second Bishop of East Equatorial Africa, in his memorandum to Salisbury Square, 1886, had emphasized this

³ Norman Leys, Kenya, 2nd ed., 1925, p. 212.

⁴ Roland Oliver, How Christian is Africa? (London, 1956), p. 9.

particular aspect of their work. He maintained that the fostering of the growth of a native agency was second only to the careful selection of Europeans. And this could only be brought about by having a "careful educational system, probably including a Boarding school at Freretown, besides elementary schools at various stations, preparatory class for training of catechists and Native Pastors. . . ."⁵ Bishop Parker was elaborating what already existed at Freretown for there was already a boarding school and a day school for both boys and girls. And at Ribe also the U. F. M. C. had a school.

Price included a central school in the plan put forward to Salisbury Square on the eve of the establishment of Freretown as a freed slave settlement. There was to be a central station to consist of "a small congregation, a good elementary school, and by and by, one of a higher order together with a class of promising young men under special training as teachers and preachers, an industrial department and an Evangelistic Agency."⁶ At the Ribe U. F. M. C. mission station, Wakefield had, by the 1870's, established some form of school, mainly for adults,

⁵ Henry Parker, "Memorandum to the C. M. S.," September 5, 1886, G3 A5/03, C. M. S. Archives, London.

⁶ William S. Price to Hutchinson, June 19, 1873, C A5/017, C. M. S. Archives, London.

in Bible reading, while at the University's Mission in Zanzibar, established by Bishop Tozer in 1864, Frere found well-established schools in 1873.⁷

The C. M. S. sent out its first headmaster, J. W. Handford, to start teaching the children of the freed slaves. He was also expected, as all missionaries were, to hold classes for adults to instruct them in the principles of Christianity.⁸

By 1885 the C. M. S. had made substantial progress in this direction. Taylor was able to report, then, that he had found pupil teachers, trained by Handford, teaching ably in the schools. He said that there were classes for the people every day: "Reading classes for the freed slaves, catechumens' classes, communicants and also teacher training."⁹ The following year, 1887, the C. M. S. missionaries put forward a system whereby the Mission could retain the best boys who, they felt, were being lost from the mission. Henry Parker, therefore, put forward a plan whereby some boys would remain and be apprenticed but the best

⁷Bertle Frere to Granville, May 29, 1873, F. O. 84/1391 and April 5, 1873, F. O. 84/1390, P. R. O.

⁸J. Handford to Lang, January 27, 1885, G3 A5/03 C. M. S. Archives, London.

⁹W. Taylor to Lang, January 5, 1886, G3 A5/03, C. M. S. Archives, London.

ones would pass on to be monitors and pupil teachers, readers, evangelists and pastors. Parker insisted that in the district schools at Chagga, Taita, Ugogo, Jilore, etc. it was necessary to teach the lower classes the vernacular of the place, and to teach the upper classes Swahili.¹⁰ Those graduating from the district schools would be admitted into the boarding school at Freretown. Here, the middle classes were instructed in Swahili, and Parker insisted that English should be taught as a foreign language in the two higher classes, the pupil teachers class and the one below.

From the beginning all missionaries were compelled to learn the vernacular. All the early missionaries devoted most of their time not only to learning the vernacular but to reducing it to readable script, as it was necessary not only for them to speak and teach the gospel in it but for the converts to read scriptures in their own vernacular and, in turn, to spread it to the rest in their own language. When Bartle Frere visited Rabai, in 1873, he found that Reubman had translated the scriptures into Kinika and had completed three dictionaries of the Nyassa, the Nyika and Swahili.

¹⁰ Parker to Lang, January 18, 1887, G3 A5/04, C.M.S. Archives, London.

After 1874, when the C.M.S. was established on the coast, almost all the missionaries devoted their spare time to the study of the vernaculars. In the 1880's the C.M.S. freed Taylor from other duties to study linguistics and to collect dialects from different parts of the coast. In 1886 he reported that he had compiled a Kichagga vocabulary, and had sent a copy to Fitch for cross-checking.¹¹ Before long similar work had been done for Nyika, Taita and Pokomo by the missionaries. By the turn of the century the missionaries had reduced all the different vernaculars into writing and translated stories from the Bible into the vernacular. In time the Bible was translated in Kinyika, Kitaita, Kikamba, Kipokomo and Kigalla, and, when the missionaries moved into the highlands, similar work was done in Kikuyu. Their zeal in the study of native languages is equalled only by their desire to spread Christianity across the whole continent.

Indirectly, of course, this led to the preservation of tribal languages and culture. In comparison with Northern Rhodesia and Nigeria, where there were many languages, we can appreciate the pressure under which they worked to resist introduction

¹¹Taylor to Lang, January 5, 1886, G3 A5/01, C.M.S. Archives, London.

of Swahili which, for the coast at least, could have served as a lingua franca.¹² Naturally, this formed the convenient language of instruction at Mombasa. The freed slaves at the settlements had come from many different tribes in East and Central Africa. However, a majority of them almost forgot their vernaculars and adopted Swahili as their native tongue. Besides, it was the native language on the coast and was, therefore, more suited to the needs of the missionaries than either English or any vernacular.

The C. M. S. Committee appreciated it. Accordingly they instructed that Swahili should be used in all their work.¹³ Handford, the first schoolmaster of the C. M. S. at Mombasa, particularly recommended its adoption in the school.¹⁴ One would have expected that the missionaries would have seized upon this widely-spoken language and use it not only on the coast but also in the upcountry. However, its association with the slave trade made it impossible for Swahili to be adopted by the missions, and

¹²J. Spencer Trimingham, Islam in East Africa (Oxford, 1964), pp. 9-10.

¹³Handford to Fenn, December 9, 1876, C A5/011, C. M. S. Archives, London.

¹⁴Ibid.

in addition, outside the coastal area--in fact only a few miles away--each tribe spoke its own language.

In 1882 Price regretted the little attention hitherto paid to Swahili in the school course, and engaged a competent Swahili teacher, most probably versed in Arabic, to teach Swahili at Freretown.¹⁵ He was particularly anxious that the youths at school should be able to speak and write Swahili in Arabic characters, which would seem to imply that he thought of it as more of an Arabic language than a Bantu language. Latter day missionaries, however, were not so anxious to develop it in this direction, and Price was fighting against heavy odds in his attempt to establish its greater use.¹⁶ Conditions were against developing and adopting Swahili as a national language. Even as late as 1966 the author was told, by an anonymous minister, that Swahili was a language reminiscent of the slave trade and could not, therefore, be adopted as a national language in the new Kenya.

By 1911 it had become clear that Swahili would be confined mainly to the coast. The C. M. S. had, certainly a Swahili cate-

¹⁵William S. Price Report to the Secretary C. M. S. on "Future Prospects of the East African Mission," October 6, 1882, G3 A5/01, C. M. S. Archives, London. (Hereafter referred to as Price Report 1882.)

¹⁶Ibid.

chism on the New Testament but Aubryn Rogers noted that almost all the other missions preferred to give such instructions in the vernacular, and that Swahili was the vernacular of the coast only.¹⁷ Missionaries increasingly saw Swahili as a great detribalizing force which process they did not want to come about, although their own mission houses served in the same capacity.

All missionaries were instructed, by their Central Committees at home, to study the vernaculars. Swahili, however, did not seem to fit in with this for it could not be attached to any particular tribe. But, by insisting on the use of vernaculars, the missionaries began the long process of perpetuating tribalism at the expense of nationalism which the use of Swahili would certainly have fostered. The Roman Catholic missions were the exception, but they learned it only for the sake of efficiency.¹⁸

The Educational Commission, set up by the protectorate government, in 1919, reported against Swahili, and put an end

¹⁷ Aubryn Rogers to Baylis, January 8, 1911, G3 A5/019, C. M. S. Archives, London.

¹⁸ Director of Education to Oldham, May 1, 1924, in Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, International Missionary Council Archives, Edinburgh House, Eaton Gate, London. (Cited hereafter as Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.)

to any hopes that it might be developed as the permanent language in the future. The Commission strongly recommended that, after the necessary preliminary instruction in the vernacular, English should be taught in all native schools, on patriotic and practical grounds.¹⁹ The commissioners reported, "Swahili is rarely spoken accurately by upcountry tribes, some of which are not even Bantu, and the Commission thinks that if a foreign language is to be taught to a native it should be English."²⁰ At Zoute, in 1926, where there gathered Protestant Missions working in Africa, the importance of native languages was a prime consideration. A standing committee, to make available the production of African Literature, was agreed upon. Subsequently was formed the International Institute of African Language and Culture which, though directly resulting from the Advisory Committee²¹ set up at the Colonial Office for tropical Africa, in 1923, cannot be divorced from the deliberations at Zoute. The Protestant missionary contribution in thus conserving tribal languages and culture cannot be underrated. And in Kenya, the coast, and Tanganyika, where the existence of a more

¹⁹ Jesse Jones, Education in East Africa (New York), p. 115.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Roland Oliver, The Missionary Factor in East Africa (London, 1952), pp. 271-272.

widespread language, such as Swahili, might have caused the abandonment of the more numerous vernaculars, the missionaries stubbornly clung to their mission to study and teach in the vernacular and to reduce the Bible into readable and written vernaculars. No nationalist in Kenya has condemned this contribution. Kikuyu nationalism was certainly fostered by the mission insofar as the language was translated into written and readable form which helped to make them aware of themselves as Kikuyu. The Kikuyu Central Association used Kikuyu in its publications.

In 1910 the Kikuyu News, published by the Church of Scotland Mission, noted that all the missions were of one type: evangelical in aim, combined with elementary education.²² John Arthur, for long the driving force behind the mission, was later to remark that the object of the schools was evangelical, and this was the purpose and objective of all Protestant missions in the protectorate through the First World War.²³ Before 1914, however, none of the missions to the protectorate, not even the C.M.S. and the U.F.M.C., with their fifty years of experience

²² Kikuyu News, January, 1910, p. 3.

²³ J. W. Arthur, "Church of Scotland Mission in Kikuyu," unpublished typed manuscript, Arthur Papers, University of Edinburgh Archives.

in the field behind them, felt the need to re-think their educational policies and systems.

The Church of Scotland Mission, with its base in two strong central stations, Kikuyu and Tumutumu, had, by 1911, established several out-schools over Kikuyu country. They were able to boast of having apprentices to teacher training, medical work and technical industry. Also, Mrs. Thomas Watson had founded a girl's school, in 1908.²⁴ The C.M.S. and U.F.M.C. built schools on the coast, in the early seventies. From their central stations, where they built their main schools, they spread out and established out-schools all over the coast. After 1900 they repeated the same process in the highlands.

The C.M.S. life-time effort to turn out African evangelists and teachers was crowned with the opening of a Divinity Class at Freretown in 1888. In the eyes of the C.M.S. at the time, this achievement was of supreme importance, for here would graduate all their future evangelists and teachers for all mission stations. William Price called July 6, 1888, the date the school was opened, a "Red-letter" day in the history of the C.M.S. East Africa Mission. He said:

²⁴Ibid.

we took the first steps in the formation of a training class for promising young men as Teachers and Evangelists. We began with a modest number of nine and, Rev. Fitch is the first Principal.²⁵

All the best candidates from the district schools were admitted here to be trained as teachers and evangelists.

In 1904 the Buxton High School, named after the Africa Secretary at Salisbury Square, and with a capacity to take between eight and 100 boarders, opened its doors to scholars.²⁶ It was, in fact, no more than a primary school,²⁷ although its name implies a higher standard, perhaps comparable to a modern high school. However, it fulfilled the function for which it was built. In his report, Jesse Jones said, "in addition to the general instruction, it maintains a training course for teachers especially fitted to teach in districts where the language [Swahili] prevails."²⁸ Religious instruction was compulsory and, in fact, comprised almost the whole of the curriculum at Bux-

²⁵Price to Lang, August 29, 1888, G3 A5/05, C.M.S. Archives, London.

²⁶A. Martin to Baylis, January 28, 1910, G3 A5/018, C.M.S. Archives, London.

²⁷Horace R. A. Philp, A New Day in Kenya (London, 1936), p. 173.

²⁸Jones, p. 121.

ton High School. It would, therefore, hardly have attracted any children from Muslim and Hindu homes. However, it was the only school on the coast and, with the extra bribery, the C.M.S. seemed to have indulged in to attract scholars succeeded in enticing a few Mohamedans who by 1910, the C.M.S. exaggeratedly reported, formed about 20% of the pupils.²⁹ The situation was seriously altered with the opening of a Roman Catholic school at Mombasa in 1908.³⁰ Government plans the same year for the opening of a secular school there further foreshadowed the near-collapse of the school, for none of the Muslims, Hindus and pagans would in the future be obliged to send their children to Buxton High School.³¹ Before this date Buxton High School held the ground, Principal Martin reporting "numbers have trebled, standard of work has improved and the teaching of the scriptures has borne good trust in many directions."³² The main drawback to the school, therefore, came to lie in its compulsory Christian nature, form and instruction in an area inhabited mainly by Muslim Swahili and Arabs, Hindus and Pagans. The C.M.S. had early on realized its difficulties so

²⁹ Martin to Baylis, January 28, 1910, G3 A5/018, C.M.S. Archives, London.

³⁰ Ibid. ³¹ Ibid. ³² Ibid.

they stepped up their campaign to gain converts by conducting instructions in Swahili, Gujarati, English and Arabic,³³ but with very little success, if any.

Neither the Protestant nor the Roman Catholic missions had any intentions, even if they had the means, of providing Africans with anything more than evangelical education. The missions, therefore, boarded the scholars to keep them away from the influence of their pagan relatives. In some cases, as in Freretown, some of them were boarded while the rest were housed with Christian families, mostly at the houses of the European missionaries. The C.M.S. Proceedings for 1891 noted that half out of 140 scholars were boarders.³⁴

The missionary gospel of making every child literate in the Bible was a genuine one. It cannot be placed in proper perspective unless it is realized that all the missions believed that their success in the evangelization of the country lay in the young souls. The African Church Council of C.M.S., with only three years existence, bore witness to it in 1903, for the African members were as dedicated as their white counterparts. In the Coun-

³³ C.M.S. Proceedings, 1905/06, p. 56

³⁴ Ibid., 1891, p. 47.

cil's meeting of 1903, they resolved

it is our duty to see that every Christian child is educated and when we are able we shall recognize it to be our duty to maintain schools everywhere.³⁵

In the early period of their work on the coast, the C.M.S. and, to a lesser extent, the U.F.M.C., drew most of their scholars and converts from the freed slaves. As long as slave trade continued the schools at the coast, at least in the early period, were not devoid of pupils since it was obligatory for their parents to send them to school. At Kikuyu, the C.M.S. drew its first scholars from their estate³⁶ where the Kikuyu families, squatting on the estate, could continue to live there only on condition that they sent their children to school.

In their numerous elementary schools and bush schools, the children attending were taught the four R's: Religion, Reading, Writing and Arithmetic, and needle work was taught the girls. The missionaries ran several classes in the central stations as work and enrolment increased, and, in time, they added Map Reading and Geography to the curriculum. All schools

³⁵ Minutes of the East African Church meeting of the African Church Council, C.M.S., February 22 & 23, 1903, G3 A5/016, C.M.S. Archives, London.

³⁶ Kikuyu News, September 9, 1909, p. 2.

worked from an authorized syllabus drawn up by their Executive Committees. Each mission varied its scheme though they kept to the basic needs. Rev. T. S. England, reporting in the Diocesan Magazine in 1903, said, "among the subjects taught are Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, Scripture, Map Drawing, Grammar, English and Needle Work."³⁷ In addition there was provision for the older boys to do agriculture in the afternoon. "With the exception of three or four of whom we hope to make teachers," noted Handford, "older boys should do agriculture in the afternoon."³⁸ Girls were also divided in classes. Their education was mainly in sewing and handicrafts, all aimed at preparing them for domestic work and as future mothers.³⁹

But the education of the young was not the only part of the missionary propaganda. For more immediate purposes, and perhaps more important, the missions had to teach the adults and catechumens to read the Bible and some passages from the

³⁷ T. S. England Report in the Diocesan Magazine, C.M.S. October, 1903, p. 3.

³⁸ Handford to Fenn, July 25, 1876, G 3 A5/011, C. M. S. Archives, London and D. A. Hooper to Baylis, December 16, 1910, G3 A5/018, C. M. S. Archives, London.

³⁹ E. Fitch to Lang, May 24, 1889, G 3 A5/06, C. M. S. Archives, London.

scriptures. The adult agents who, for various reasons, either connected with work on the mission or at their homes, could not attend school daily presented something of a problem. The missions, therefore, organized Sunday School classes for them or arranged evening classes on the evenings most convenient to them.⁴⁰

Miss Harvey, of C. M. S., wrote:

In June I visited a class of women taught by Priscilla Bai, widow of George David. These are adults who come to us as freed slaves, different work it is to teach them, but I found they could nearly all repeat a different text and all those who did so received some coloured cotton and a needle.⁴¹

It was not necessary that these adults and catechumens should know how to write. Knowing the principles of Christianity for their immediate and even for their long term purposes meant ability to read simple translations of the Bible or selected passages of the scriptures in the vernacular. Evangelists, too, held village services for them. According to the Kikuyu News, these village services "were the real fighting grounds in the battle

⁴⁰ Handford to Lang, January 27, 1885, G3 A5/04, C. M. S. Archives, London.

⁴¹ Extracts, Annual Letters, C. M. S., 1887, pp. 344-345.

against the awful mass of ignorance and superstition. . . ."⁴²

All the missions therefore laid very strong emphasis on translating the Bible into vernaculars, in simple orthography, at the expense of academic linguistic perfection,⁴³ in order that the material could be made readily available to the adults in as simple a form as possible. It was important that they should be able to recite the passages and not that they should attain academic literary perfection. Growing classes made the necessity even greater. The C.M.S. early realized the situation and so set up a subcommittee for translation work in 1887.⁴⁴ In 1910 the need to have a common form of orthography was even more necessary. Consequently, the Protestant Missions set up a subcommittee of the Alliance for translational work.⁴⁵ This became a very important subcommittee, and in the twentieth century, it eventually began to strive for academic perfection.

⁴²Kikuyu News, August 4, 1908, pp. 3-4.

⁴³J. F. Ade Ajayi, Christian Missions in Nigeria 1841-1891: The Making of a New Elite (London, 1965), p. 131.

⁴⁴Shaw to Lang, June 30, 1887, G 3 A5/04, C.M.S. Archives, London.

⁴⁵Henry Scott to Maclachlan, September 24, 1908, MS. 7607, National Library of Scotland Archives.

Among the boarders, the duration of stay at school and the content of their education varied from mission to mission. The demands placed upon the boarders at home and, surprisingly, in the missions, was far too great to insure continuous stay in the mission houses. For one thing, the boarding schools competed with parents for their children. Whether Kikuyu, Akambas, Nyika, or Chagga, there was always work assigned to the child-rent, at different ages, in the family, and responsibility and work increased with age. The missions had, therefore, to contend with the more pressing needs demanded of the scholars in looking after goats and cattle, helping with farming and harvesting or, as in the case of girls, in education into the ways of adult life. This was, in fact, traditional education which Jomo Kenyatta says, "begins with birth and ends with death."⁴⁶ This would demand uninterrupted stay at home unless at a particular age education was to be done elsewhere. Hence the more reason for the parents' opposition to the mission house. In the tribal society where there was a very intricate educational system which involved training in matters of the family and the tribe, it was more meaningful and necessary for the children to stay at home regularly; their attendance at mission schools

⁴⁶ Jomo Kenyatta, Facing Mount Kenya (London, 1938), p. 99.

was a wasteful diversion from the education of the young. The missionaries, however, thought otherwise.

This new system of education which involved living away from the family was not, according to the African, proper education. In the twenties, when opposition from parents was very violent, attendance, at best very irregular, at the various out-schools was very small. In the boarding school regular schooling and classroom work was interrupted by the missionaries themselves, who used the boarders as servants and as labourers on the mission estates and surroundings. It is no exaggeration to say that the boarders did more physical work than classroom work. For example, the boarders at Taveta, of whom there were forty-two in 1895, had converted the mission settlement from a desert into what the Taveta Chronicle called a veritable garden.⁴⁷ That the Taveta Chronicle was able to call it "Mahoo," meaning happy land, is an ample testimony of the labour put on it by the boarders. And they had constructed a canal half a mile in length to irrigate the mission land.⁴⁸

It was this very labour that the parents needed most. Over

⁴⁷ Taveta Chronicle, Vol. I, 1895, pp. 3-4.

⁴⁸ C. M. S. Proceedings, 1894/95, pp. 84-85.

on the highlands, down in the Nyika plains or northwards along the coast and into the Tana River banks, the youths were needed to help with farming, and the girls to help with domestic tasks.

The difference between mission work and education and tribal work and education is clear and sharp. In the missions they were under the strict supervision of a white man; they learned to be Christians and, in time, to despise their home, family and tribe, while at home their daily family life trained them to be useful members of their society. In the missions they were required to cast out the old traditions, with the result that they became detribalized, much to the surprise of the white missionaries.

African parents, elders and headmen, therefore, opposed the establishment of schools and continued to do so, as they did the opening of a mission station, up to the beginning of the First World War. Where they did not succeed they used force to keep their children at home with perhaps greater success than the missions did to keep them at school. At Tumutumu, the C.M.S. reported that their failure to open out-schools was due to the opposition of the headmen and chiefs.⁴⁹ Henry Scott reported to his mission that the boys attending the central school had been con-

⁴⁹Kikuyu News, June 11, 1911, p.2.

tinuously persecuted. "Again and again," he wrote, "we hear of a boy being beaten by his father because he will not desist from attending our village schools."⁵⁰

Most of the missions had to compromise or else face complete failure. The Church of Scotland Mission had to close its school in 1908, for the month of April, because most of the children remained at home to look after goats. The mission declared a holiday for the whole month.⁵¹ At Mombasa, at least in the early days, where the freed slaves were under the care of the C.M.S. it was possible to insure some form of regularity in school attendance by use of force. But with the adults it was not always possible to do so, since they had also to cultivate their plots of land for their own subsistence. "The reading classes," wrote J. W. Handford, "have fallen off considerably, and I do not press them at present for nearly every one is engaged in his shamba, either here or away at Maweni."⁵²

The evil influences of Mombasa and, later on, of Nairobi, upon the converts greatly disappointed the missionaries. Missions all over Africa and India considered that towns and cities

⁵⁰Ibid., April 23, 1909, p. 6. ⁵¹Ibid., April 6, 1908, p. 5.

⁵²Handford to Lang, February 5, 1885, G3 A5/04, C.M.S. Archives, London.

should be avoided as centers of sin and evil. On the coast their stations were surrounded by a predominantly Muslim population, which was a great obstacle to evangelization. Before the coming of the Company, and latterly the British administration, the converts and, in particular, the freed slaves, at the mission stations could look nowhere else for refuge from the Arab-Swahili except to the missionaries. But when the Company came, and later on the British administration, it was no longer necessary for them to seek such help from the missionaries. Both white and black Christians sought protection from the Company. When the protectorate was established, the situation became firmly established with the result that the missionaries' power over their converts and scholars was reduced to the minimum, unless they chose to persuade the reluctant administration to intervene on their behalf.

Missionaries were disappointed about this change of situation and loss of power over their converts even though the establishment of British rule and administration certainly strengthened their position. Miss E. C. Wilde represented their feeling thus:

They are a stiff necked and indifferent race of people, surrounded by strong Mohamedanism. It is not that they are ignorant. Many of them are enlightened intellectually with regard to Christianity but they wilfully reject it and boast to your face that they are no

longer people belonging to the mission but have chosen the Government and its influence.⁵³

The construction of the railway and increase in commercial activity at Mombasa further robbed the missionaries of their teachers and scholars, and made it impossible for the missionaries to provide continuous schooling, even though the period of stay at school was very short. For one thing, wages in the Company's service and the railway were higher than those the missionaries could offer. Apart from the pay, most of the converts were delighted that at Mombasa and Nairobi there were no missionaries to punish them when they erred or to continuously demand that they attend services and schools and to attend to their moral behaviour. What they needed was not so much reproach but time and encouragement to help them settle down and adjust themselves to the towns. It is true that at Mombasa and in the services of the Company, life was very different from that under the strict supervision of the missionaries. Higher wages and freedom from the mission, in the eyes of the Africans, would compensate for the loss of everything the missionaries had offered. Binns wrote home complaining:

The attractions of railway opening for work are very great. Women have left their homes, young women just at susceptible age going off to work far away with nobody to care for them. Young men in great demand

⁵³ C. M. S. Proceedings, 1905/06, p. 57.

as servants, clerks, etc. able to earn good wages . . . simply spending it in loose living. That the civilization which accompanies the introduction of railways is not one that the friends of the mission can welcome with unmingled satisfaction the above indicates.⁵⁴

Such a situation seriously affected the missionaries' schools and their work in general; attendance was reduced to a minimum and, in some missions, the classes were empty of both teachers and scholars. The Bombay Africans, most of whom were catechists, artisans, carpenters, masons and teachers, began to leave the missions for railway employment as soon as the Company was formed. The estrangement between them and the white missionaries accelerated the process, although it would have happened anyway.⁵⁵ The general situation at the mission schools was graphically reported in the C.M.S. Proceedings for 1899 when it would seem to have reached a serious peak at the coast.

Railways have lured boys from Freretown. There has been no anxiety for them to become teachers and the Divinity class has come to a standstill. The attractions of Mombasa have been felt as boys' attendance diminished, and Dormitory lads only number three. Difficulty of finding teachers is acute, there are only three to do the work for five.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Ibid., 1897/98, p. 98.

⁵⁵ Price Report 1882, p. 5.

⁵⁶ C.M.S. Proceedings, 1898/99, p. 87.

Labour for the mission had become scarce by 1888 immediately after the Company began, and in the following year Smith reported that this was due to the higher wages of the Company.⁵⁷ From the Church of Scotland Mission came reports that Nairobi had had similar effects on their schools. For example, it became increasingly difficult at Kikuyu, near Nairobi, to bring youths to school for training and to keep them there for a definite period of apprenticeship. This was not the case at Tumutumu, which was far away from Nairobi.⁵⁸

In 1916, out of a total of thirty-two schools in the whole of the Protectorate, thirty-one were mission schools. In comparison, all the 1,337 schools in Uganda then were mission schools, as were all the 2,054 in Nyasaland. On the West Coast of Africa there were 119 mission schools out of a total of 125 in Sierra Leone, 569 out of 589 in the Gold Coast and 1,059 out of 1,108 in Southern Nigeria.⁵⁹ In the German colonies, as reported in 1911,⁶⁰ all the 54 schools in German Southwest Africa were mis-

⁵⁷ F. Smith to Lang, September 25, 1889, G3 A5/06, C.M.S. Archives, London.

⁵⁸ Kikuyu News, June/July 1914, p. 49.

⁵⁹ J. H. Oldham, "Notes on the Educational Situation," not dated, 1923, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M.C. Archives, London.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

sion schools, there were 918 mission schools out of a total of 1,001 in German East African (Tanganyika and Ruanda Urundi) and 319 out of 531 in Kamerun. It is abundantly clear from the general picture that ninety percent of the schools in sub-Sahara Africa were mission schools, and the type of education provided was also missionary. This continued to be so until the mid-twenties. In the East African Protectorate which became Kenya in 1920, the government added two more schools to the one they already had.⁶¹

It is evident, as the first Director of Education, J. S. Orr, admitted in 1922, that mission education had previously amounted to little more than learning to read the Bible, and that the missionaries had failed to take into consideration African needs and environment. More important was what Peter Kigundu, lay agent of Weithaga pastorate, admitted in conversation with Hooper, in 1924, when he said that such education had not fitted the African for anything.⁶² Until 1922 the general response in the Protectorate was one of opposition. The C. M. S. reported "nearly all the schools in the interior are small for people fail to appre-

⁶¹Jones, p. 119.

⁶²H. D. Hooper to Oldham, November 21, 1924, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

ciate the advantages of education and many of them, in their hostility to Christianity, refuse to allow their children to attend."⁶³

In the sub-Sahara continent, the response and demand from chiefs for education was spontaneous and astonishing, for the first fifteen years of the twentieth century. This was certainly a demand made to the missions since, up to this time, it was they who exclusively carried on the Western form of education. The colonial government was too busy with the maintenance of law and order, and the establishment of administration, to bother about education. Moreover, the governments were primarily interested in the economic exploitation of the colonies, to which subject they would pay first attention, this being the case in the British East African Protectorate, and in the German colony to the south. Witness, for example, the beginning of the East African railway in 1895, and the introduction of white settlement to the protectorate on the highlands in 1902. Sir Charles Eliot, the first Commissioner, or his successors, could not be bothered about the education of the Africans of whom he was contemptuous, and who he believed must go under:

. . . viz, that white mates black in a very few moves
 . . . here can be no doubt that the Masai and many
 other tribes must go under. It is a prospect which I

⁶³ C. M. S. Proceedings, 1908/09, pp. 51-54.

view with equanimity and a clear conscience. . .
[Masaidom] is a beastly, bloody system founded
on raiding and immorality.⁶⁴

In the early 1900's, for example, the chiefs of Sierra Leone, Ashanti and Ibo country, to name only a few from the West Coast, did not demand that the missions give the children Western education in place of the indigenous education.⁶⁵ They wanted Western education, which seemed special insofar as it was a new weapon that would enable their sons to share in the "white man's power."⁶⁶ This astounding demand by the chiefs for education was manifest nearer home, in Uganda, where J. J. Willis noted, in 1915, that

the fact that there are 80,000 children enrolled in schools is enough testimony for this desire and none have urged more forcibly the work of Christian education in Uganda than leading chiefs of the country.⁶⁷

It was already becoming clear to the missionaries, no less than to the Africans in Kenya, that those who could read and write qualified as clerks, tax collectors and foremen, or, as assistants on

⁶⁴ George Bennett, Kenya, A Political History: The Colonial Period (London, 1963), p. 14 and quotation thereon.

⁶⁵ Ajayi, p. 133.

⁶⁶ Charles Pelham Groves, The Planting of Christianity in Africa, 4 vols. (London, 1948-1958), Vol. III, p. 239.

⁶⁷ J. J. Willis, "The Educational Problem in Uganda," in Church Missionary Review, 1915, p. 654.

settlers' farms, at a higher rate of pay than existed in the missions. This type of education did carry also status and acceptability to the Colonial administrators, although the new form of association then emerging between literate Africans and the new administration was despised initially by a majority of Africans. A pertinent example was noted in Sierra Leone where the chief in the Wesleyan Limba Mission urged his people to send their child-rent to school "even though when educated they should look down upon their parents as ignorant, for they will be benefitting themselves."⁶⁸

In the early days at Mombasa the C.M.S. were able to get under way because they had literate Africans from Bombay to help them. But the power of this type of education became evident when there was a demand for them in the Company's services and on the railways where they could fetch higher wages. Thus a process of depopulating the missions of those with mission education began with real opportunities in the Company. By 1910 the process reached a climax. Binns wrote:

I am sorry to say that among the freed slaves and their descendants there is not so much to encourage, there is not a single one of all the descendants brought from Bombay helping as paid agents except one or two--but the much larger pay which they receive in

⁶⁸Groves, III, p. 235.

government etc. attracts them away as their manner of life is much more extravagant especially their manner of dress and the pay we are able to offer is not sufficient except for the simplest needs. They earn twice as much in government.⁶⁹

In 1900 Bishop Peel found that there was general discontent at Mombasa among the mission teachers and agents, and that most of them had resigned from the mission. Bishop Peel wrote:

On my arrival at Mombasa I found that two Africans in Priest Orders and some lay workers had left the mission. The only clergyman left in Deacon's Orders had sent in his resignation. Two of the leading remaining licensed lay readers had also sent in their resignations. Young men were holding aloof from the Mission.⁷⁰

Education, however, had opened these new horizons. On the highlands the C.M.S. teachers and agents regarded the time spent in the employment of the mission as charity work which they were only too glad to give up in favour of more work and higher wages with the government or at Nairobi.⁷¹ Higher wages and status were therefore synonymous with education. And the converts and chiefs wanted their children to become educated precisely

⁶⁹ Binns to Baylis, January 25, 1910, G3 A5/018, C.M.S. Archives, London.

⁷⁰ G. W. Peel to C.M.S., "Report on the Mombasa Mission," (not dated), 1900, G3 A5/016, C.M.S. Archives, London.

⁷¹ Barlow to Secretary, January 25, 1915, Arthur Papers, University of Edinburgh Archives.

for that.

By 1914 the administration had begun to employ literate Africans on the highlands. These had all passed through the missions. A few Christians were then employed as tax collectors and interpreters, or to count huts and young men liable for hut and poll taxes.⁷² This might have acted as a strong stimulus to schools and schooling and perhaps have produced a change of attitude on the part of the African parents towards sending their children to school, since such education was necessary for them to be employed with the government. But a majority of the African parents in the protectorate had not become so wage conscious as to want to send their children to school to be employed by the government or elsewhere outside the tribe. In the initial stages most of them despised such employment. They became very hostile to those who were associating with the government to put into force any of the new measures introduced by the new administration. Poll and hut taxes were the first measures of the new administration that affected the economic life of the Africans. These proved very unpopular, and most Africans opposed them openly or sought to avoid paying them in dif-

⁷²E. W. Crawford to Manley, June 10, 1914, G3 A5/020, C.M.S. Archives, London.

ferent ways. Counting people for any purpose at all was taboo among the African tribes in Kenya or elsewhere, in Tanganyika and Uganda. All parents believed that if their children or young men were counted they would die. So they became very hostile to those of them who associated themselves with the government and helped to count young men. The Giriama, for example, rose against the government in 1914 as a protest against taxation and anything connected with it.⁷³ And it is true that those Africans who took employment with the government to count Giriama and to collect tax suffered victimization. The first outburst was certainly directed against them.

Employment in the government did not produce positive, popular demand for schools, except on the part of the converts who were in any case considered outcasts by the rest of the tribe. It was equally true that as education became necessary for employment the first expressions of interest in education by the Kikuyu were confined to the convert.

In the early stages of its administration the British government hastened to appoint chiefs and headmen as a base for the new native administration. But there was no kingship or chieftainship among the Kikuyu, the Akamba, the Masai, the Nyika or the Poko-

⁷³ Leys, pp. 126-130, passim.

mo, and the first influential personalities found by the British, such as Lenana, were often mistaken for paramount chiefs even when they were no more than Laibons. And, in the case of Kinyanjui or Karuri, nor more than athamaki.⁷⁴ Nonetheless, these men, influential either in military affairs or as religious leaders, were hastily appointed as chiefs and headmen. Where there were none, a few porters serving with the British had climbed their way up to become caravan headmen. Or, the Masai warriors who had served in the British expeditionary forces had proved invaluable and influential enough to fill the gap. In the 1902 East African Ordinance entitled "Village Headmen Ordinance, 1902," Anthony Low writes:

two streams accordingly emerged in the early days to form the hierarchy of chiefs and headmen in the East African Protectorate--prominent local individuals and men schooled in mercenary service with the British.⁷⁵

But this was too pretentious for it was difficult to get the native to recognize any one individual member of his tribe as a person of authority even then.⁷⁶ The Masai military men and the coast cara-

⁷⁴Vincent Harlow, E. M. Chilver, and Alison Smith, eds., History of East Africa, Vol. II (Oxford, 1965), p. 44.

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 45.

⁷⁶Machakos Annual Report, 1913, DC /MKS /I/I/I, Kenya National Archives, Nairobi.

van headmen especially, were a disgrace, for they became corrupt, and abused their power to an extent hitherto unknown in traditional society. As a remedy, the administration, still abhorrent of indirect rule, hastened to legalize the Council of Elders in the Native Tribunal Rules of 1911. The government urged that traditional elders sitting in viama or njama should dispense law and order, and settle cases in their own tribes. But such councils could not replace chiefs and headmen. Traditional councils of elders had been opposed to the missions and the coming of the new administration. They constituted the only traditional authority charged with the responsibility to preserve the tribe, its institution, laws and customs and were essentially conservative and opposed to discharging duties which they considered alien to the tribe, that they were called upon to discharge. They could not, therefore, collect taxes, recruit labourers, keep the roads clean or apprehend miscreants. The chiefs had to do these tasks and the necessity of their performance in turn ensured their permanency while on the other hand they "militated against the advance of the council to a pre-eminent position."⁷⁷

Artificial and arbitrary though the institution of chiefs and headmen was in Kenya, it became entrenched in the administrative

⁷⁷Harlow, Chilver and Smith, History of East Africa, p.49.

structure. The administration felt that if efficiency were to be achieved they had to educate the sons of the chiefs and headmen. They therefore initiated the policy and the missions took it up with enthusiasm.

In the Protectorate, there was already a Department of Education and an Advisory Board for Education on which sat representatives of the missions. The first Director of Education arrived in 1911, but he was not particularly concerned with African education. Dr. Henry Scott of the C.S.M. represented the Protestant Missions until 1911 when the Ven. Archdeacon J. J. Willis, C.M.S. Chairman of the Missionary Education Board of the Alliance, succeeded him on the Government Board.⁷⁸ The government plan for the education of the sons of chiefs was given wide publicity over the highlands. For example, the government held a meeting with chiefs and headmen at Kiambu to discuss government policy and the education of the sons⁷⁹ and another one at Thika, where representatives of the principal missions were represented.⁸⁰

The British Protestant missionary societies naturally felt that such a task was within their realm, and stubbornly pressed

⁷⁸ Kikuyu News, July 1, 1911, p. 3.

⁷⁹ Ibid., June 25, 1910, pp. 5-6. ⁸⁰ Ibid.

the administration to entrust them with it. The Missionary Education Board of the Protestant Mission, formed in 1908, then put forward the plan for the education of the sons of chiefs and headmen, to ensure that the future leaders would come under religious influence.⁸¹ The missions further believed that this would make the Africans, and the new chiefs in particular, friendly and non-hostile.⁸² The British Protestant missions were strongly opposed to any policy which would take away from them this role. The Board believed that any other agency would either exclude or minimize the religious aspect of education which they believed was the right one for the Africans. In the light of their mission to evangelize Africa, they were right in insisting that they were best suited to the task, but they lacked the means and the staff to undertake it alone.

In such a situation the government, with limited resources, and seriously committed to the policy of retrenchment, was prepared to place the responsibility in the hands of the enthusiastic missions. A few enlightened officials knew that the missions had not the means to carry on the work but nonetheless the government entrusted the missions with the education of the sons of chiefs, undertaking to provide seventy-five rupees for the maintenance of

⁸¹Ibid., April 6, 1908, p. 4. ⁸²Ibid.

each. They further reserved the right of inspecting the schools.⁸³ Government concern over the question of this education and their awareness of the shortcomings of the mission schools, was revealed in the appointment of Mr. Thomas to inspect and recommend which of the mission schools were suitable for the task.⁸⁴ The missions' concern was primarily to provide Christian education for these future leaders of the Africans. They had no plans or scheme other than the one essentially for their converts. Obviously, they had to do more than they had previously done if they were to persuade the government and particularly the chiefs, to make them a grant of one-third each towards this education.⁸⁵

The Missionary Education Board, at its October Meeting, 1910,⁸⁶ asked that the education be exclusively assigned to the English-speaking missions, presumably the Protestants, because of the "great importance of establishing sentiments of loyalty to the Crown in the hearts of the Native people of this

⁸³ Minutes of Annual Conference, British East Africa Mission, C.M.S., January 24-27, 1910, G3 A5/016, C.M.S. Archives, London.

⁸⁴ Kikuyu News, April 2, 1911, p. 4. ⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Minutes of the Missionary Education Board of the Protestant Mission, Kenya, October 10, 1910, G3 A5/018, C.M.S. Archives, London.

colony and especially of those to be trained as native rulers."⁸⁷

They seem to have persuaded the A.I.M. member on the Board to accept a resolution which, if approved by government, would have excluded his mission and the Catholics from the education of the sons of chiefs. The resolution showed that these missions were nationalistic and empire-minded. But the government overruled the resolution and the advice of the inspector that there should be a Protestant and a Roman Catholic school for each tribe, or section of it, prevailed.⁸⁸ The Tumutumu Notes, published in the Kikuyu News, reported enthusiastically:

Tumutumu was chosen as chiefs' Sons School by the Education Board[under C.S.M.]. The Kenia Province is divided into CMS, Italian RC are appointed for Fort Hall. CMS for Embu districts and Tumutumu. Italian RC for Nyeri. Where are both RC and Protestant, the chiefs are to have their own choice.⁸⁹

However, the government seems to have realized the need to open government schools where religious instruction was to be optional. Government policy was that the chiefs could co-opt for their sons, not to be instructed in religion. The missions were opposed to such a policy. The Bishop of Mombasa excitedly wrote:

⁸⁷ Ibid. ⁸⁸ Kikuyu News, April 4, 1911, pp. 5-6.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

Government have the education of chiefs' sons and relatives and of prominent men out of the hands of the mission and have begun at Ukamba a school for such under a European where the education of pagans without religion will be carried on. Government in its worse than neutrality is virtually saying to pagans: the Christian religion is not a thing of much value after all. If you do not want it in your schools or territory you have only to say so and we the government. . . will see that the missionaries and their teacher do not intrude.⁹⁰

Secular education rather than the purely Christian education hitherto in existence, began after World War I. The government had reserved the power to inspect the schools chosen for the education of the sons of chiefs. Moreover, they had gone further, to the disappointment of the missions, and built government schools; the first at Machakos in Ukambani opened its doors to its first pupils in 1915,⁹¹ and two others were opened at Mombasa (Waa School) and Mwai in 1921. The government aimed at relating their education to the needs of the locality and environment, with a bias towards technical arts and agriculture.⁹² The government wanted as much cooperation with the mission as they could achieve though the missions deprecated this development and especially the lack of compulsory religious instruction in the

⁹⁰Peel to Manley, March 20, 1913, G3 A5/019, C. M. S. Archives, London.

⁹¹Jones, p. 119.

⁹²Ibid., pp. 119-120.

schools. Although the missions thought the government was lacking in its support of Christian education, this was not so.⁹³ For one thing, the government could not escape from employing mission-trained African teachers even if they had wanted to for they had none of their own. Jesse Jones said that

[The Masai Native School was] generally regarded as an excellent example of successful cooperation between government and missions not only in the use of Native Staff trained in the mission but also in the mutually helpful relationships with the African Inland Mission nearby. . . .⁹⁴

After the war the government, and even the missions themselves, was becoming increasingly aware of the shortcomings of the missions in the education of the Africans, though even as late as 1918 most officials thought it would be unwise for the government to compete with missionary schools. They suggested strengthening the inspection system and bringing mission systems up to government requirements to include technical education in their curriculum.⁹⁵ "The present form of education in missionary schools,"

⁹³ Peel to Manley, March 20, 1913, G3 A5/019, C. M. S. Archives, London.

⁹⁴ Jones, p. 120.

⁹⁵ District Commissioner to Provincial Commissioner Mombasa, November 7, 1918, Coast 16/38, Kenya National Archives, Nairobi.

wrote one District Commissioner, "is not suitable for the training of the natives. A rudimentary knowledge of reading and writing is all that appears to be taught."⁹⁶

African soldiers serving in the Carrier Corps, and on active service in the First World War, returned home from Tanganyika after the war versed in and impressed with the ways, abilities and achievements of the white man no less than with their destructive power. Education became a high premium for employment after the war, and they were in a hopeless position without it. African church elders became apprehensive. While they thanked the missionaries for ministering the word of God to them, they became aware that they had failed to educate them in the different kinds of employment by which progress could be made. Peter Kigundu openly told H. D. Hopper, in 1924, that for all the twenty years the C. M. S. had been in Kikuyu the missionaries had not given the Africans the training and education to fit them to carry any responsibility.⁹⁷

In the 1920's there was an increasing demand by the Africans in Kenya not only for long-delayed education but for the right

⁹⁶Ibid.

⁹⁷Hooper to Oldham, December 5, 1924, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C., Archives, London.

to shape and control themselves. The Kikuyu in particular were willing to pay a special tax for education after 1924⁹⁸ over and above existing taxation which was already very high for the Africans.

After the war most enlightened missionaries believed that the Africans were justified in their demands. But they refused to relinquish this role to even the colonial administration which, faced with post-war depression and lack of cash, was only too willing to let the missions do it. However, a few government officials began to be seriously concerned with the education of the Africans. J. Ainsworth, advisor on Native Affairs, put forward a plan for cooperation between the government and the missions, a plan that became the basis of the Educational Commission two years later. The 1919 Education Commission was concerned with education in the whole protectorate and, as one would expect, the education of the white children dominated the deliberations.⁹⁹ With respect to African education, what finally emerged reflected Arthur's thinking. Arthur was, after all, a very influential member of the Com-

⁹⁸ J. Scott to Oldham, June 17, 1929, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C., Archives, London.

⁹⁹ Arthur to Father, November 19, 1919, Arthur Papers, University of Edinburgh Archives.

mittee, as a representative of both the C.S.M. and, unofficially, of the Protestant Mission.¹⁰⁰ Either with respect to European or African education, the missionary view was, according to Arthur, that such education must be aimed at creating proper relations between black and white. This, he argued, could only be brought about if such education were solidly based on Christianity. As the experiences of the times show, they wished to produce obedient and subservient Africans on one side, and sympathetic and benevolent white masters on the other. This is the view of African education--one that the Africans opposed and sought to control so that they might change it--that the settlers of Kenya, and their representatives on the commission, took. A majority of the settlers wanted to exclude all else save that the Africans must be taught to labour on the white man's farms. The subsequent unofficial alliance between Arthur and Lord Delamere, both powerful members of the Advisory Committee on Native Education, formed in 1924, as evidenced in the resolution moved by Delamere and seconded by Arthur that "Higher education must be provided immediately for Africans provided that literary education is regarded as a

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

means to building up character and not as an end in itself,"¹⁰¹ shows the way missionary opinion was subject to change. There was no question but that European children had the right to the best education which the state could provide. Finances were obtained from taxation, with a preponderance of contributions from the Africans.

The 1919 Education Commission recommended that the education of the Africans be left to the missions, although it was clear that they could not cope with the situation even with substantial government aid.¹⁰² The principle of government grants to missions was put into effect in 1920-1921, when the government made block grants to the two major British Protestant missions, the C.M.S. and the C.S.M.¹⁰³ The government, however, reserved the right of inspection. This then was the basis of the cooperation between the government and the missions that became more permanently fixed after 1923. It must be inter-

¹⁰¹ Minutes of the Advisory Committee on Native Education, Kenya, June 9, 1925, Coast 58/1642, Kenya National Archives, Nairobi.

¹⁰² Arthur to Oldham, May 14, 1921, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

¹⁰³ Hooper to Oldham, June 20, 1927, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

preted as government evasion of the responsibility that was even more necessary in view of the fact that the Africans were paying a preponderant share of the revenue of the country through taxation, with no corresponding return in social services.

John Oldham, Secretary to the International Missionary Council at Edinburgh House in London, and one of the most enlightened missionaries on the home front, was taken by surprise when Ormsby-Gore, the Under Secretary of State, asked him to draw up a plan for such cooperation between government and the missions.¹⁰⁴ This was in response to the first Phelps Stokes Commission report on education in Africa, published in 1922, and received with enthusiasm by the Colonial Office. The Commission was financed by the Phelps Fund in 1920, and the American missionary societies working in Africa had suggested it. It is clear that, realizing their failure in their work in Africa, their experience on Negro education gave them cause to call for a change. The phenomenal recommendations of the Commissioners, that African education must henceforth be related and adapted to the needs and the environment of their societies is both an admission of their own previous failure and a sign of their

¹⁰⁴ Oliver, The Missionary Factor in East Africa, pp. 265-266.

realization that the Africans would not tolerate only evangelical education.

Oldham confessed, in 1921, when the Commission was in progress, that he was not sure what kind of education would suit the Africans best.¹⁰⁵ Reports from missionaries in the field had expressed surprising demands from the Africans for a Western type of education. In Kenya, the Kikuyu Central Association had taken this demand onto the political platform, and demanded government schools at a meeting with the government at Dagoretti in 1921.¹⁰⁶

The whole problem, and especially the seriousness with which the Colonial Office addressed itself to African education in the early twenties, did not allow Oldham to wait, as he had hoped, for another commission of inquiry, one that was to study and make similar recommendations on the education of the Africans in East and Central Africa in 1924. He had, therefore, to act quickly if the missions were not to be thrust aside under overwhelming pressure from the Africans themselves. Both the C. M. S. and the C. S. M. were already aware that they would

¹⁰⁵Oldham to Major Wood, March 21, 1921, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

¹⁰⁶Dagoretti Political Record Book, Vol. III, 1918-1924, pp. 12-13, KBU/76, Kenya Government Archives, Nairobi.

have to redouble their efforts and reorganize their methods to justify the grants they were receiving, and to meet the demands of the Africans for a more broadly-based education. Handley Hooper, C. M. S., in particular, blamed the C. M. S. for being dilatory and for failing to carry through a programme for training teachers which they had undertaken in 1921. Kahuhia Central School opened for that purpose in 1922, was under threat of closure in 1925, and the Home Committee had failed to supply European replacements at Mombasa and Kaloleni, due to a retrenchment policy at home brought about by lack of funds.¹⁰⁷ Hooper believed that the original policy of direct evangelization over a wide area, with elementary education, was the right one at the time, but that lack of funds and staff did not permit them to embark on the training of teachers as well. So he believed that, at this stage, the C. M. S. should have asked government to accept educational responsibility. He said:

The C. M. S. is too poor to undertake the training of teachers. We can continue with the expensive policy of maintaining European evangelists but the natives themselves will not agree to that indefinitely nor will they be willing to assume financial responsibility in-

¹⁰⁷ Hooper to Oldham, June 30, 1925, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

indefinitely.¹⁰⁸

The C.S.M. faced similar problems in 1926. Horace Philip, at Tumutumu, blamed his mission for the inability to cope with the ever-rising demand for education, even with government aid. Philip wrote:

In fact it has been found necessary to temporarily suspend two important centres of activity and the withdrawal from other out-stations is under serious contemplation. Our financial position is our biggest embarrassment. . . .¹⁰⁹

Garfield Williams, who was a member of the second Phelps Stokes Commission, ascertained that the missions could not be equal to the task unless they were prepared to revolutionize their educational methods and standards.¹¹⁰ Though, by implication, he seems certainly to have appreciated the nature of the problem, and to have taken into account that African societies were changing and demanding that this be so, he should have emphasized the situation and the missions' failure in educational policy. Most missionaries were certainly aware of the African national consciousness at this period. However, they chose not to publicize it but to redirect it to suit their own purposes. Some, like Hooper, had advised that the education of the African should be tailored to meet

¹⁰⁸Ibid. ¹⁰⁹Kikuyu News, June 25, 1927, pp. 15-16.

¹¹⁰Oliver, The Missionary Factor in East Africa, p. 267.

his national aspirations.

Oldham's memorandum to Ormsby-Gore in 1923 pointed out the claim of missionary societies, in British colonies and Protectorates in Africa. He wrote:

In British Colonies and Protectorates in Africa, nine-tenths of the education is in the hands of the missions. The relationship of government and missions in education in the new and changing conditions are a matter of great concern to both.¹¹¹

It was evident to him that the resources of the missions in either manpower or finance could not meet this great responsibility. He believed that cooperation with the government was the only way out of the problem. His main concern, therefore, was that the missions and the government should not work at cross-purposes and dissipate their efforts and money. This, he believed, could only be brought about by full and frequent consultations,¹¹² and to that end, he suggested the formation of Central Boards of Education, in the different colonies, and an Advisory Board of Education, at the Colonial Office level, to be composed partly of non-officials.¹¹³ In 1924 emerged the Advisory Committee on Native Education in Tropical Africa, after a conference called

¹¹¹Oldham to Ormsby-Gore, May 9, 1923, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

¹¹²Ibid. ¹¹³Ibid.

especially to discuss the memorandum. The governors attending the conference, which was chaired by Ormsby-Gore, were instructed to form Central Boards of Education in their territories.¹¹⁴

In Kenya in 1924 the Central Advisory Board of Education was formed on which the British Protestant Missions were well-represented.¹¹⁵ At the district level local Boards of Education in each district, composed of representatives of the missions and of native councils in the area, under District Officers, were formed. They were to evolve and execute policy on African education at the district level, and to advise the Central Board at Nairobi on matters of African education in the district. Thus much of the education in the district remained in the hands of the local committee which, for the first time, took in representatives of the Africans.¹¹⁶ The importance of African representation cannot be ignored since they were to finance most of their education not only from indirect taxation to the central govern-

¹¹⁴ Oliver, The Missionary Factor in East Africa, p. 269.

¹¹⁵ Oldham to Mrs. McGregor Ross, October 27, 1924, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

¹¹⁶ Department of Education Circular No. 28, September 22, 1924, Coast 31/431, Kenya National Archives, Nairobi.

ment, but more importantly, from funds they had decided to raise by a voluntary education levy in 1925.¹¹⁷ Accordingly, Senior Commissioners resolved that "the composition of local committees must be left to local discretion but that in cases in which natives are not included the full numbers of twelve members should not be completed in order to allow for their subsequent inclusion."¹¹⁸ The Central Advisory Committee on African Education particularly stressed that every school Area Committee should include African members.¹¹⁹ The Committees became at once executive and advisory. They decided how to spend money for education as well as the more important task of how to raise money for various projects in the area.¹²⁰

But a demand for a change of policy in the missions' education and for greater effort and responsibility by the colonial government towards African education, is no indication that the

¹¹⁷ J. Scott to Oldham, June 17, 1929, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

¹¹⁸ Director of Education to Senior Commissioner, Coast Province, June 16, 1925, Coast 31/431, Kenya National Archives, Nairobi.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Kikuyu News, December 1926, pp. 2-3.

missions had not fulfilled a particular function up to this time in the education of the Africans, although for the most part

letters alone received attention and little more was accomplished or attempted than to cover the country with a network of "bush" schools where pupil teachers, themselves but poorly educated, haltingly and without method or supervision taught the three R's for a living. And innumerable children wasted their time.¹²¹

Oldham, to be sure, had in his memorandum particularly stressed the part the missions had played. And the second Phelps Stokes Commission Report, published in 1924, noted this great contribution which had been, for the most part, in the hands of the two major British Protestant missions. However, they endorsed Oldham's views that "it was inevitable and greatly to be desired that the Colonial governments should assume responsibility in regard to education and devote large funds to the purpose."¹²²

The Colonial Office Advisory Board on Education for the Natives in Tropical Africa, which was a result of Oldham's recommendation, officially reiterated the above views with respect to the responsibility of the government concerning the education of the

¹²¹"An Experiment in African Education in Keyna," in *The Round Table*, Vol. 20, June 1930, p. 564.

¹²²Oldham to the Archbishop of Canterbury, May 3, 1923, and Oldham to Ormsby-Gore, May 3, 1923, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

Africans in the colonies.

Had this policy been fully implemented in Kenya it would certainly have been in line with that of the paramountcy of African interests, enunciated by the Colonial Office in the famous White Paper of 1923. More particularly, perhaps, if success had come from the Dual Mandate policy, promulgated the following year, the colonial government in Kenya could not have absolved themselves from taking responsibility for the education of the Africans in Kenya, a process which the report had emphasized and recommended as the best means to ensure that they received a fair chance of economic and moral development.

The situation in Kenya, with respect to African education, was depressing.¹²³ Government grants which were made to the two British Protestant Missions began in 1908, and £750 were made to each.¹²⁴ The C. M. S. school at Mombasa was given £500 for improvement in staff and to enable it to take in Indian and, presumably, Swahili Muslim students.¹²⁵ The Indian

¹²³Education Department Annual Report, 1924, p. 23.

¹²⁴Philp, p. 171.

¹²⁵Martin to Baylis, January 28, 1910, G3 A5/018, C. M. S. Archives, London.

community at Mombasa had petitioned the government in vain to have a school of their own where their children would not be forced to take instruction in religion. The C.M.S. had agreed to a conscience clause covering attendance there, but the Indian community still wanted their own school. The government grant to missions for 1918 had risen to £2,900. The government only raised their grants to missions when they agreed to the principle of grants-in-aid in 1922-1923. In 1923 the grants-in-aid rose to £4,305 out of the total expenditure on African education of £28,110. In the following year the expenditure on African education had risen by about £9,000, the total expenditure being £37,000.¹²⁶ In comparison with government expenditure in East and Central Africa, this amount was appreciably high. The Nyasaland government, the East African Commission reported, was spending £3,000 on African education in 1924, and Uganda, with an African population of about three and one-quarter million, £20,839. Grants to missionary societies for the year 1924 were 10,346.¹²⁷

However, the Kenya figure is insignificant in terms of over-all government expenditure on education in the colony, and against revenue contributed by the Africans through taxation.

¹²⁶ Jones, p. 111. ¹²⁷ Ibid.

That year government spent £75,000 on education mainly to Europeans but with a significant proportion to Asian children. The per capita expenditure of £12 for a European child at school and two pounds for an Asian child but nothing for an African child,¹²⁸ only serves to show the gross inequalities in social services in a country where the African contributed more to the general revenue than the total contribution by both. In 1923, for example, the Africans contributed £501,615 by taxation while they received very little in return except the bare structure of law and order.

The principle of cooperation between the government and the missions on African education in Kenya, once begun, became a permanent feature on the Kenya scene. Government grants went up year by year. By the end of the twenties only small signs of this partnership showed, but in the thirties and forties government contributions to individual missions for education far surpassed those that individual missions were able to contribute from both their Home Committee and from local sources.¹²⁹ Until 1927 only the C. M. S. and C. S. M. were receiving grants. Then two Roman Catholic institutions and the third British Prot-

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Oliver, The Missionary Factor in East Africa, p. 277.

estant mission, the United Methodists began to receive government grants also.¹³⁰ The bulk of the government grant to individual missions was used to pay for the staff of the mission schools. A majority of this grant went to pay for the salaries of African staff who were the products and employees of the missions, and the rest paid either in full, or in part, the salaries of European missionaries.¹³¹

On the mission front came important changes to meet the demands for efficiency and high standards required by the government and, perhaps indirectly, by the Africans themselves whose voices were becoming louder and louder every time. The outstations were in time transformed into elementary schools to provide for a four year, continuous primary education. The mission schools placed on the list of aided schools were staffed by the better-educated, but still old class of qualified teachers. The government inspector, Evan Bliss, since 1925, and the missionary inspectors, ensured that the schools fulfilled the conditions laid down as qualifications for government grants. The C.M.S., however, were unable to replace some of the old teach-

¹³⁰ Evan Bliss to Oldham, September 19, 1926, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham I. M. C. Archives, London.

¹³¹ Oliver, The Missionary Factor in East Africa, p. 277.

ers and the Africans refused to raise money to subsidize them.¹³²

The mission central station became a nucleus for the training of teachers for primary schools. Hitherto catechists and church teachers were trained on the central station. In time, also, the former mission boarding schools, and those prescribed as schools for the sons of chiefs, formed the nucleus for the new secondary schools "where a handful of the best pupils," writes Oliver, "were able to continue their education, at first to the ninth and eventually to the twelfth year, English being used as vehicular language."¹³³

These changes, however, took place in the thirties and forties, when missionary secondary schools, drawing almost all their funds from government, dotted all the country from the coast to the highlands and on the the lakeshore region. For the time being the government and the missions directed their efforts to the improvement of the mission out-schools which primarily catered for the community in an attempt to improve it. The Jeanes principle, which was applied in Kenya, took its precedent from the southern parts of the States, where Jeanes teach-

¹³²Hooper to Oldham, December 9, 1926, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

¹³³Oliver, The Missionary Factor in East Africa, p. 259.

ers, trained from the Jeanes Fund, had worked with success in Negro rural schools, particularly concentrating on the needs of rural schools and communities.¹³⁴ The Phelps Stokes Commission, noting the success of the principle with its application to Negro communities there, recommended its application in Kenya.

In 1925 the Jeanes School was opened at Kabete in the highlands with funds obtained from the Carnegie Trust.¹³⁵ J. W. C. Dougall was its first principal. The school concentrated on character training, and paid particular emphasis to practical subjects to meet the needs of village communities. The different missions in Kenya selected teachers to spend two years in residence at the school. At Kabete the Jeanes teacher was taught new methods of teaching, and new subjects relevant to the immediate needs of the community. Upon graduation, he then went back to his community to impart this knowledge in the way he was taught and expected to. The Round Table was unaware of the power and influence the Jeanes teacher was to wield in his own African society, and in the revolt

¹³⁴For a study of the Jeanes Schools and the application of the Jeanes ideas in the southern parts of the United States, see Lance Jones, The Jeanes Teachers in the United States (New York, 1937), especially Chapter VIII.

¹³⁵"An Experiment in African Education in Kenya," in The Round Table, Vol. 20, June 1930, P. 565.

against mission education, when it commented

without powers, without prestige, the Jeanes teacher goes back to his district to battle with custom prejudice, and disease, to teach and to inspire his people with enthusiasm for new things, and to do this without wasting or losing whatever may be of value in native life and custom as it now is to remake rural Africa.¹³⁶

The Jeanes idea, permanently perpetuated, would have definitely placed the African in an inferior position in a world of science and technology that demanded higher education because it narrowed his needs and expectations to the confines of the community. However, it enjoyed popularity for a time although the opposition of the Africans to it made it impossible for it to become a permanent feature. The Jeanes era in Kenya African education ended in 1939. In 1927 fifteen Jeanes teachers graduated from Kabete; by 1931 there were thirty-six in the field.¹³⁷ The Jeanes principle gained popularity with the governments of Nyasaland, Northern Rhodesia and Southern Rhodesia. In 1929 Jeanes schools were started at Zomba, in Nyasaland, at Mazabuka, in Northern Rhodesia, and Domboshawa in Southern Rhodesia.¹³⁸

¹³⁶ Ibid., p. 565.

¹³⁷ Groves, IV, p. 117.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

The shortcomings of the Jeanes principle lay in its emphasis on rural needs, for which this education and presumably that of the majority of the Africans, had to be exclusively relevant. It took no account of the fact that the Africans of Kenya, as well as those of Central Africa, were to rise beyond this level. The Africans almost immediately began to express dissatisfaction with it from the second half of the twenties: it was no exaggeration for an African to point out that it was discriminatory and backward looking. As such, it neatly fitted in with the ideas on education for the Africans in Kenya of the settlers, who saw nothing good in higher education for them. It is no wonder then that Delamere, on their behalf, supported it wholeheartedly and opposed any secondary education of a literary nature for the Africans.¹³⁹ But to say it was discriminatory is not to say that it did not meet a particular demand at the ground level, for the time. No doubt the Jeanes teachers improved the shabby mission bush schools as best they could.

On the other hand, the Jeanes teachers increasingly came to see it as a device between the missions and the government to hold the Africans back permanently. In the 1920's they began to

¹³⁹

Kenya, June 9, 1925, Coast 58/1642; Kenya National Archives, Nairobi.

protest and revolt against it. The Jeanes system offered their children no opportunity to compete with or equal the Europeans in the different walks of life of the territory. They were increasingly, and rightly too, equating economic opportunities with European education. The influence and position of the Jeanes teachers in his church and community made him able to mobilize and lead the movement to protest against the Jeanes principle, mission control of education, and also the European controlled church.

Unfortunately there is serious lacunae in the documentation of the leadership of the Jeanes teacher in the ensuing protest of the twenties. . . The move by Africans to wrest control of their own education, relevant to this chapter, began after 1924 and continued through the thirties. This attempt, Professor Terence Ranger has pointed out, was widespread throughout East and Central Africa.¹⁴⁰ Interviews held at Karia and Kyambu have revealed a surprising lack of confidence in the missions among the Africans in the highlands about the same time.¹⁴¹ Thus the questions, "Why do you teach our children only to use

¹⁴⁰ Terence Ranger, "African Attempts to Control Education in East and Central Africa, 1900-1939," in Past and Present, December, 1965, No. 32, pp. 57-85.

¹⁴¹ Interview with Mbiyu Koinange, Minister of State, Republic of Kenya, September 5, 1966.

the Native axe and prevent us from using saws and hammers? Why do you tell us to make wooden spoons? Do you not want us to climb the ladder of civilization? Is it wrong for your children to want to have chairs and beds and be like Europeans?" were being asked, with great force, in Kenya.¹⁴²

The Jeanes teacher also became a rallying point for the movement by African Christians to break away from the church and to establish their separate churches. But he was by no means the sole leader. The few cases we have might appear more as accidents than the general pattern. But the influence and popularity they held among the Africans in general make us believe that they would be the most obvious people to command a large following of any breakaway movement from the distinctly alien churches towards African ones. For one thing, it was not uncommon for them to be elected to local councils as well as to their church councils. Zakayo Kivuli, for example, the founder of the African Church Niniveh, in 1940, from the Pentecostal Church of which he had been a leading member, is an outstanding example.¹⁴³

¹⁴²Ranger, p. 68.

¹⁴³F. B. Welbourn and B. A. Ogot, A Place to Feel at Home: A Study of two Independent Churches in Western Kenya (London, 1966), pp. 76-77. Zakayo Kivuli was a member of the Location Council from 1937 to 1943. He became chairman of the African Committee of the Pentecostal Mission in 1936 and in 1939 he became an authorized evangelist.

He was at Kabete twice, first from 1927 to 1929, and then, for a brief spell, in 1931.¹⁴⁴

About the same time that the Jeanes School was opened, the Alliance of the Protestant Missions was considering the opening of a College at Kikuyu. Buildings already existed for the government, against much opposition from the settlers, had, after the war, made over to the Alliance £5,600 left over from the East African War Relief Fund. The Alliance had grand plans for a college that would be all things at once. They planned to have a medical college, a theological college and teachers training college within this single college.¹⁴⁵ The money was part of the fund exclusively contributed by the Africans of Kenya, then East African Protectorate, to the war effort. Many of the young men had also gone into active service but mainly as the Carrier Corps.

These grand plans did not mature. The Alliance did not have the funds to get such an undertaking off the ground.¹⁴⁶ The principle of cooperation between the missions and the government, moreover, tied the hands of the missions to projects that were

¹⁴⁴Ibid.

¹⁴⁵Oldham to Arthur, February 17, 1925 and March 31, 1925, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

¹⁴⁶Ibid.

were feasible. In 1925 the Director of Education instructed that the buildings erected by funds from the East African War Relief Fund be used as a High School for the Africans. The school was to be managed by a representative Board of Governors from missionary societies, government officials and non-officials as well as private donors.¹⁴⁷ In 1926 the school opened with twenty young men.¹⁴⁸ The presence and influence of the Protestant Alliance was felt from the very beginning. The missions, in addition to being represented on the governing board, were given the right to nominate all members of the teaching staff.

At the beginning the school was part vocational and part junior-secondary. The curriculum began with cultural training, passing on to training in teaching, medical work and commercial subjects. This was only a beginning of what in the thirties became a full-fledged secondary school which was the best in the country for many years.

Oliver believes that the governments of East Africa were able to engage in a joint effort to begin the University College

¹⁴⁷ Director of Education to Secretary, Church Missionary Alliance, June 20, 1926 (copy), Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

of East Africa at Makerere in 1938 because of the progress achieved by the Mission Secondary Schools during the fifteen years of the cooperation between them and the government on education. It was evident that these schools, outstanding among which were the Alliance High School, Kikuyu, Budo, in Uganda, and Minaki, in Tanganyika, were turning out men with the necessary educational standard and ability to meet the standards of Makerere which was affiliated with the University of London. The record of the Alliance High School is evident everywhere in government departments of Kenya and in private business. The Alliance Kikuyu graduates are among the best leaders of the new Kenya.

CHAPTER VI

THE TURBULENT TWENTIES

Missionaries and the Labour Problem and African Political Associations, 1921-1929.

When the 1914-1918 War came, the Africans of Kenya were as much involved in it as anybody else. This was essentially a European war which they did not understand. However, many thousands of able-bodied Africans in Kenya were conscripted and saw service in Tanganyika, and then in German East Africa, mainly as Carrier Corps.¹

The War found the missionaries struggling to gain converts on the highlands. Likewise it found the settlers of Kenya struggling with the pioneering problems. As far as the missionaries were concerned, the opposition of the Africans to their work was more important than the coming War in which they were not involved as combatants.

The work of the missions came to a standstill from 1917 until the end of the war. When conscription into the Carrier

¹Donald Savage and Forbes Munro, "Carrier Corps Recruitment in the British East Africa Protectorate," in Journal of African History, Vol. VII, No. 2, 1966, pp. 313-342.

Corps was enforced, many African able-bodied men ran away from it and sought refuge, among other places, in the mission stations where they were only too willing to become Christians. The number of converts increased and the missionaries were happy with what they mistakenly believed was a positive response towards Christianity. However, they refrained from receiving any more escapees from conscription once they discovered that it was the true reason why so many able-bodied African men wanted to become Christians.²

In 1917 the British Protestant Missions formed the Mission Carrier Corps, better known as the Kikuyu Mission Volunteers, as a direct contribution to the war effort.³ Carrier corps had become scarce as the British war effort became intense, and problems of supply for distant areas demanded more carriers. J. W. Arthur, C.S.M., Harry Leakey, C.M.S., and Lee Downing of the American Inland Mission, responded to this call and formed the Kikuyu Mission Volunteers; they were recruited mainly from C.M.S., C.S.M. and the A.I.M. They

² Savage and Munro, p. 329.

³ J. W. Arthur, "Kikuyu Mission Volunteer Corps, 1917-1918," in J. W. Arthur Papers, University of Edinburgh Library Archives, Edinburgh. (Cited hereafter as Arthur Papers, University of Edinburgh Archives.)

numbered 1,750 altogether and saw service for nine months in Iringa where they occupied two positions, Muhanga and Boma Mzinga.

J. W. Arthur commanded the Kikuyu Mission Volunteers, the other European missionaries serving in the corp in different capacities. One reason they chose to lead their own converts was that they wanted to continue to minister to them. Moreover, they did not want them to lose the influence of the mission, which was bound to happen once the Mission Volunteers were mixed up in the general Carrier Corps. The report of 100 casualties among the Mission Volunteers, as compared to the conservative figure of 46,619 reported dead from among the Carrier Corps during the War, explains, in part, the good care that the Kikuyu Volunteers got from the missionaries who were commanding them.

The War left deep scars on the minds of the Africans. In Tanganyika, then German East Africa, the Carrier Corps were subjected to very unhealthy conditions, often with no proper place to sleep in; medical facilities, if any, were inadequate, and the long and difficult marches were, to say the least, very taxing. It is no wonder that so many thousands of them died and many thousands more did not return. In 1922, there were

13,748 reported missing.⁴

In 1920, Horace Philp gave a telescopic picture of the effects of the War on the Africans of Kenya. The Kikuyu, he wrote, "have had a mighty shaking during the past years; the War took a heavy toll, scores of whom died from disease, then came the famine followed by the terrible influenza which took toll of 17,000."⁵ The same year, Kenya became a Crown Colony. J. W. Arthur, C.M.S., in an address at the opening of the Mission Council at Kikuyu foreshadowed the policy that the Missions, at least the British Protestant ones, were to follow. He said:

Kenya is to be one of the most important assets of the British Empire. The missionaries are an integral part of the Colony, and must work with the Government and settlers for the good of the whole. We are in a particular sense the trustees of the native peoples and we must see that their interests are safeguarded and forwarded. . . . It is further impossible for us--nor would we wish to do so--to dissociate ourselves from the members of the British Empire and of the Kingdom of God from the political life of the country. . . . The other great force--settlers. Here there is no desire on our part to dissociate ourselves from their lives. . . . We can help the settler in many ways: supplying him with

⁴Savage and Munro, p. 341.

⁵Horace Philp to Editor, Kikuyu News, October 19, 1920.

trained boys, clerks, artisans and hospital dressers etc. . . .⁶

The problem of labour force for the settlers of Kenya became serious toward the second half of the first decade. The settlers put considerable pressure on the administration to institute compulsory labour for them. Officials of the administration had hitherto recruited labour for the settlers, as well as for public works, and chiefs and headmen had organized press-gangs for the purpose.

Serious shortage of labour, however, led to the appointment of a Labour Commission in 1912-1913.⁷ J. W. Arthur, C.S.M., was appointed to the Commission. The Labour Commission heard a lot of evidence, from which two diverging views emerged. All the settlers giving evidence unanimously advocated that native taxation should be increased to drive the native out of the Reserves to earn money. They also maintained that the Reserves should be reduced to the minimum.⁸ This was the recommendation that the Labour Inquiry Board,

⁶J. W. Arthur to Mclachlan, October 5, 1920, Arthur Papers, University of Edinburgh.

⁷Report of the Native Labour Commission, 1912-1913, (Nairobi, 1913).

⁸Report of the Native Labour Commission, 1912-1913, (Nairobi, 1913), Vol. iii, Minutes of Evidence.

appointed by Governor James Hayes Sadler, had made in 1908.

In its report, the Board stated that,

the land set aside for Native Reserves should be limited to the present requirements of the natives; the committee being of the opinion that the existence of unnecessarily extensive reserves is directly antagonistic to an adequate labour supply.⁹

Against settlers were ranged missionaries and administrative officials. They spoke against both increase in taxation and reduction of the Reserves. Mr. C. R. Lane stated that the latter step might assist the labour supply but would ruin the Reserves.¹⁰ C. W. Hobley maintained that there should be enough room for expansion so that there would be enough land to allow for the increase of population over three generations.¹¹ The Commission recommended against any increase in taxation.¹² On the question of the reduction of the Reserves as a means of forcing out the Africans to go and work on European farms, the Committee, unfortunately, did not recommend one way or the other, due to lack of enough information. However, they recom-

⁹McGregor W. Ross, Kenya from Within (London, 1927), p. 92.

¹⁰Report of the Native Labour Commission, 1912-1913 (Nairobi, 1913), Minutes of Evidence.

¹¹Ibid. ¹²Ibid.

mended that the Reserves should be demarcated, and that sufficient land should be reserved for the native population.

All the missionaries were opposed to any step that would ruin the Reserves, and with them the African home and family. Most of them complained of the crude conditions to which the Africans, as labourers, were subjected, and also condemned the brutality of the employers. Settlers had argued for compulsion on the ground that the African male was lazy, and spent most of his time getting drunk. The settlers, however, were entirely ignorant of the division of labour inherent in African society. The only time that the settlers ever saw the Africans at leisure was probably either immediately after the harvest when they were enjoying the fruits of their toil, or during the rainy season, when they had long finished breaking the ground up and the women had also finished putting the seeds into the ground. But, even at this time, the Africans had their homes to attend to and huts to repair or to put up new ones. Against this faulty argument, which unfortunately some missionaries sometimes held, Ruffel Barlow of the C.S.M. put forward what was, certainly, a representative view of most missionaries. Barlow maintained:

As regards Kenya district, one doubts whether the number of natives leaving it to go to work could very well be increased. The maximum supply of labour has been obtained for some time back by means of a press-gang system put into force by the chiefs. The usual argument that one meets when urging that the native needs time to attend to his own affairs is that the male native while at home does no work, but lolls about watching his women slave for him. This is an erroneous idea.¹³

The Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society wrote a long memorandum to the Colonial Office, endorsing the views of the Commission. Anticipating the Northey Circulars of 1919-1920, that instructed government officials to recruit labour for private employers, the Society challenged the view of the settlers that it was the duty of the government to provide labour of industrial development.¹⁴ It reiterated, more strongly than the Commission had done, that any form of administrative recruitment was bound to lead to compulsion, and stressed that forced labour for private profit was slavery.¹⁵ However, it pointed out that the best form of incentive to a steady flow of labour was not compulsion by administrative decrees but a

¹³ Kikuyu News, September 15, 1913, pp. 20-21.

¹⁴ John Harris to Harcourt, June 11, 1914, C.O. 533/148, Public Records Office. (Cited hereafter as P.R.O.)

¹⁵ Ibid.

good employer, good treatment and better conditions of service.¹⁶ It was the lack of confidence in the employers and in government protection, the Society maintained, that caused a serious shortage of labour.

During the war years, Kenya government officials continued to give aid to settlers to get labour. The officials devised various means to do so, but whatever they were, there was already disguised forced labour for private employers. Certainly, from 1917 through 1918, the official view was that labour must be forthcoming for private employers. With the shortage of labour, due to the government's intensive conscription to the Carriers, officials often forced young boys to go out to work, not only on public duties but also for settlers. There were complaints from the missions (the C.S.M. at Tumutumu is a case in point) that the government was forcing boys to go out and work.¹⁷

The missions were not consistent on the question of forced labour, and their points of view varied from time to time. While a majority of them were against forced labour, a few believed that

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Kenya Province, Annual Report, 1917-1918, PC/CP 4/1/1, Kenya National Archives (Cited hereafter as Nairobi Archives.)

they could subordinate the interests of the Africans to those of the settlers. For example, at the same time that the government was moving towards compulsory labour, Horace Philp, C.S.M. medical missionary at Tumutumu, called on the government to define the role and the relationship of the natives in the economic development of Kenya. In his memorandum of 1917, he maintained that it was the duty of the government to provide labour for private employers. The Africans were to provide cheap labour for the settlers. He wrote:

I believe it criminal of the Government to allow unsound economic development, e.g. to attract settlers here and give them land and not to see that there is an inadequate labour supply for their needs. If this happens and the settlers rise up in arms against the Government, and is the Government not to blame?¹⁸

Philp was more worried about the end of the War, when most settlers would return to a demand for African labour which was already drained to the minimum. Anticipating this great demand immediately after the War, Philp warned the administration:

On the other hand, if the Government acting under pressure from settlers at present on their farms drain the already depleted reserves without regard to the raising of the future generation of labourers and the claims of other settlers returning from the

¹⁸Horace Philp, "Memorandum to the Government," Appendix in Kenya Province Annual Report, 1916-1917. PC/CP 4/1/1, Nairobi Archives.

War, the results are going to be equally disastrous. . . .¹⁹

The significance of the government placed on Philp's memorandum is quite clear for they attached it to the Annual Report for the country for the year 1916-1917.²⁰ About the same time, the Governor, Conway Belfield, declared that the claims of the settlers for African labour on their farms were not to be subordinated to the policy of confining the natives on the Reserves.

He said:

I am prepared to state definitely that we desire to make of the natives useful citizens and that we consider the best means of doing so is to induce him to work for a period of his life for the European. . . . We further desire, by human and properly regulated pressure within the reserve, to induce natives to go out and work either as individuals or as residents with their families on occupied farms.²¹

With the end of the War, returned home to Kenya many of the settlers who had been fighting the Germans in Tanganyika. They were soon to be joined by yet a larger wave of settlers from England. During the War years, the War Council of Kenya had put forward a plan for expansion in which the number of European

¹⁹Ibid. ²⁰Ibid.

²¹Raymond Buell, The Native Problem in Africa, 2 Vols. (New York, 1928), Vol. I, p. 332. (Cited thereon.)

settlers were to be doubled.²² In 1919, the British Government approved of the Ex-Soldiers' Scheme in which the ex-soldiers just released from the War were resettled in Kenya.

Their coming increased the problem of labour force, which was already critical. There was no doubt that both the War, and the post-War diseases and epidemics, had drained the Reserves of their population to their absolute minimum. The settlers, new and old, increased their pressure for a government policy of forced labour. They found a useful ally in the new Governor, Edward Northey, an ex-general, who was awarded the governorship in 1919, among other things, for service in the East African campaign, mainly in Nyasaland.

In 1919, Governor Northey announced his policy to the Convention of Association. He said that it was the duty of the government to encourage voluntary labour work, but that he hoped to back it up by legislation to make it effective.²³ In October 23, 1919, his Chief Native Commissioner issued the Labour

²²Vincent Harlow, E. M. Chilver and Alison Smith, History of East Africa, Vol. II (Oxford, 1965), pp. 233-234.

²³Buell, I, p. 333.

Circular No. I.²⁴ Essentially, the Labour Circular No. I instructed all government officials, chiefs and headmen, to help private employers to get labour. The two relevant clauses in the Circular stated that,

all Government officials in charge of native areas must exercise every possible lawful influence to induce able bodied male natives to go out into the labour field. Where farms are situated in the vicinity of a native area, women and children should be encouraged to go out for such labour as they can perform. . . .

Native Chiefs and Elders must at all times render all possible lawful assistance on the foregoing lines. . . .²⁵

The Bishops of Mombasa and of Uganda, R. S. Heywood, J. J. Willis, and the head of the Church of Scotland, J. W. Arthur, immediately responded to the Labour Circular. In what became popularly known as the Bishops' Memorandum they criticized, in detail, each item in the Circular.²⁶ While the bishops recognized, clearly, that the government memorandum introduced

²⁴Labour Circular, No. I, "Native labour required for non-native farms and other private undertakings," October 23, 1919, Nairobi Archives.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶The Bishops' Memorandum, "Native Labour," in file marked "Correspondence with Chief Native Commissioner, 1918-1939," Archives of the Archbishop of East Africa, C.M.S. Nairobi. (Cited hereafter as Bishop's Archives, C.M.S., Nairobi.)

"compulsory labour,"²⁷ they stated that they were not concerned whether it was a bad thing or a good thing.²⁸ A close analysis of the Bishops' Memorandum leads us to believe, with Arthur, who later wrote to the governor, that, for the moment, at any rate, the three heads of the British Protestant Missions, the C.M.S. and the C.S.M., were more concerned about the "best way of obtaining the best results than attacking the policy."²⁹ All their criticisms lost their substance when, in the end, the Bishops' Memorandum declared

Yet, when we have said this, we recognize that much in this [government] memorandum is good and indeed necessary. Compulsory labour is not in itself an evil, and we would favour some form of compulsion. . . .³⁰

Indeed, they were objecting to the means, and in particular, the wide powers that the Circular gave to the chiefs who they believed would abuse such powers. The bishops would have raised no objection if the instructions to recruit labour had been confined

²⁷Ibid. ²⁸Ibid.

²⁹ Arthur to Edward Northey, November 5, 1919 (Confidential), Arthur Papers, University of Edinburgh Archives.

³⁰ Bishops' Memorandum.

to the British officials.³¹ There is little doubt that, in their excess zeal to please the officials, who were after all their employers, the chiefs and elders carried their power a little to the extreme. Missionaries had reported that the chiefs were cruel in forcing the people to work, and cases of bribery and corruption were not unusual. Africans giving evidence to the Labour Commission had complained of the pressure they suffered under native officials to leave the villages and work for wages elsewhere; Thuku stated that the chastity of girls had been abused, though he was not clear whether this had been done by the chiefs or the settlers. Fundamentally, these abuses were a result of the policy of forced labour, in whatever form it was. It is difficult to approve, therefore, of the policy without also accepting the repercussions of the policy itself. Moreover, there can be no justification for the bishops' approval of a system which they knew was morally wrong. This becomes the more surprising when they were aware that they would be criticized and condemned for doing so. "In spite of the arguments against it," wrote Arthur in November, 1919, "of the criticism that may be levelled at us, we would prefer to see such compulsion."³²

³¹Ibid.

³² Arthur to Edward Northey, November 5, 1919, Arthur Papers, Edinburgh University Archives.

It is pertinent to comment, in the light of the evidence we have from the confidential communication between Arthur and the Governor, on November 5, immediately after the Bishops' Memorandum was issued, that the heads of the two British Protestant Missions in Kenya, or their representatives, had approved of the broad lines of this policy before the governor issued the Circular.³³ In the same communication, Arthur, on behalf of the two bishops, reiterated their stand which was that "compulsory labour, with proper safeguards, will be better for the country and the natives."³⁴ In a confidential letter to Arthur, the governor had stressed that his concern was primarily for the prosperity of the country and for the good of the natives, and he wanted to stop idleness and drunkenness which was so common among Africans.³⁵ On this question, of course, the governor could not have found a better ally than the missionaries. Arthur said:

the principle of our work has been that we believe that every native ought to work, and that work is a necessary part of Christian character. To Christianize natives, to educate them, to make them work,

³³Ibid. ³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Edward to Arthur, November 5, 1919, Arthur Papers, University of Edinburgh. Archives.

are surely not conflicting but complementary principles.³⁶

J. W. Arthur, whom the Bishop of Zanzibar thought had greatly influenced the bishops, further approved of voluntary labour for women and children for private individuals, provided that chiefs were not made responsible for recruiting such labour.³⁷ Both the Bishops' Memorandum and Arthur's letter to the Governor stressed this aspect of the white man's duty to the Africans. They were agreed and bent on eradicating laziness, drunkenness and dances. Arthur wrote:

With regard to dances, idleness, and drunkenness, naturally, we are at one with you in the desire to see these stopped and the native becoming a useful industrious citizen of the country. Our criticism, of course, is set at, not attacking the policy, but the best way to obtain the result. We all know the abuses in the Native Reserve, when the chiefs get men to go out to work; we want the men to work, & after much consideration, think that compulsory labour, with proper safeguards, will be better for the country & the native; in spite of the arguments against it, of the criticism that may be levelled at us, we would prefer to see such compulsion. Believing so, we considered it was up to us to candidly say so, and, if compulsory labour is adopted, then you, Sir, know our position with regard to it.

³⁶ Arthur to Oldham, May 20, 1920, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

³⁷ Arthur to Edward Northey, November 5, 1919, Arthur Papers, Edinburgh University Archives.

Again with regard to the women & children, we have no objection either to such going out voluntarily, but we were very afraid lest the chiefs, with considerable power & the support of Govt. behind them, should abuse that power.

We do agree on the main principles. . . .³⁸

The Bishop of Zanzibar, however, denounced the policy of forced labour. "Apart from War," he wrote, "it is in itself, immoral, and we hold that forcing Africans to work in the interests of European civilization is a betrayal of the weaker to the financial interests of the stronger race."³⁹ The Reverend Percy Waller appealed to G. T. Manley, the African Secretary at Salisbury Square, to apply pressure to the C.M.S. in England to oppose the policy. Waller condemned the governor, and in particular the C.M.S., for accepting the policy. Waller wrote:

General Northey, the unsuccessful General was rewarded with a Knighthood and Governorship. These greedy planters who only come to make pennies. . . have been trying to get native labour cheap and on their own terms. General Northey is a godsend to them and he has drawn out a scheme for compulsory labour. . . the good missionaries have accepted it with its safeguards. . . But they have in this way accepted the principle of forced labour for private behoof.⁴⁰

³⁸Ibid. ³⁹Ross, p. 107.

⁴⁰Percy Waller to Manley, not dated, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

The Bishops' Memorandum only served to alienate the African Christians from the missions. In Britain, missionaries expressed deep disappointment with the Bishops' Memorandum. They jumped into the arena to oppose the Labour Circulars and so rescued the heads of their missions in Kenya.

Throughout 1920 and up to November, 1921, the battle over forced labour was fought in Britain. While the battle was raging in private and public circles in England, the Kenya Government carried forward, by legislation, their policy of securing cheap African labour for the settlers. In 1920, the Kenya Government brought in two measures to make the Africans wage-earners on European farms and so provide the cheap labour for these farms. By the end of the war the official policy was clear; the economic development of Kenya, and more so, the economic well-being of the settlers, who were the backbone of the country's development, was to take priority over everything else, even at the cost of destroying the Reserves. The provision of a steady flow of cheap African labour to work on European farms dominated official thinking during the war and immediately thereafter. To achieve this, the government brought in two Acts. First, the taxation of

Africans was doubled; it rose to eight rupees per hut.⁴¹ And second, the government repealed the Registration Ordinance in 1920, which had been in the statute books since 1915.⁴² By the new Registration Ordinance, the government introduced the kipande system in which all adult African males were to carry a registration card on which were his fingerprints and his previous record of employment. Any African adult found without his card was liable to one month imprisonment and/or to a fine not exceeding £15. 8,377 Africans were prosecuted, fined and imprisoned under the Act, within a period of less than eighteen months.⁴³ This was a measure to curb the desertion of African labour from private farms and industries which the employers had pressed for.

It would not have been unreasonable for the government to expect the Africans of Kenya to pay more tax if such taxation was followed by a corresponding return in social service, or by the development of the Reserves.

Indeed, the missionaries argued that if the native taxation must be raised the native must get the increase returned to him

⁴¹F. B. Welbourn, East African Rebels, A Study of Some Independent Churches (London, 1961), pp. 121-122.

⁴²Ross, p. 188. ⁴³Ibid., p. 190.

in real benefits, not, as Arthur put it, "the increase of the Police to safeguard European property or the King's African Rifles to protect him against Somali raids--these are not tangible benefits to him but an increase of his sorrow."⁴⁴

Mr. F. C. Linfield's minority report on the Ormsby-Gore Commission Report on East Africa in 1924, remarked that, for 1923, the government spent a little over one quarter of the taxes, paid by the Africans to provide some form of services to the Africans. But he continued:

in the last ten years the Kitui of Akamba have paid £ 207,749 in direct taxes alone and that "you may travel through the length of the district and breadth of the Kitui Reserve and you will fail to find in it any enterprise, building, or structure of any sort which Government has provided at the cost of more than a few sovereigns for the direct benefit of the natives. The place was little better than a wilderness when I first knew it twenty-five years ago, and it remains a wilderness today as far as our efforts are concerned. If we left that district tomorrow, the only permanent evidence of our occupation would be the buildings we have erected for the use of our tax-collecting staff."⁴⁵

Regarding the labour issue, Oldham was quick to see that what was at stake was more than the question of forced labour. From the various reports he had of missionaries working in

⁴⁴Arthur to his father, June 5, 1920, Arthur Papers, University of Edinburgh. Archives.

⁴⁵Report of the East Africa Commission, 1925, Cmd. 2387, Supplementary Memorandum by F. C. Linfield.

Kenya, and of administrative officials like McGregor Ross, it was clear to him that the Kenya Government had sacrificed the interests of the Africans for those of the settlers. Neither the Colonial Office, nor the Kenya Government, Oldham believed, could reconcile such a policy to the principles of trusteeship in the government of subject races that the British Government had long been committed to. In a communication to the Bishop of Zanzibar, Oldham said,

I want the circular withdrawn. . . . But we need a definite declared policy of development of native life in the Reserves worked out in terms of practical administration publicly accepted and endorsed by the imperial Government. We need further to provide means by which native opinion can be made more articulate. Above all we need to educate the settlers.⁴⁶

Oldham wrote to the Colonial Secretary, Viscount Milner, and pointed out that only a Royal Commission could divert the British Government and the Kenya Government from the wrong policy they were carrying out in Kenya. He called the attention of the Colonial Secretary to the unanimous feeling of the Standing Committee of Missionary Societies in Britain and Ireland that the Colonial Office had failed to discharge its obligations and duties as trustees of the natives of Colonial territories, as was evident in the policy the

⁴⁶Oldham to Bishop of Zanzibar, April 14, 1921, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

government was pursuing in Kenya.⁴⁷

In response to the criticism over the Labour Circulars, Governor Northey issued another circular to explain his previous one. In his second circular he instructed the administration to see that chiefs and headmen did not abuse their powers. Milner was persuaded to believe that the circulars were aimed at encouraging the Africans to go out to work rather than at forcing them to do so.⁴⁸ Milner did not solve the labour question, or the larger one of a general policy that Oldham was pressing for before he left office. In February, 1921, W. S. Churchill took over. On September 5th, in a despatch to the Governor, Churchill ruled that neither the administrative officers nor chiefs and headmen were to recruit labour for private employers.⁴⁹ Churchill wrote:

The principle that Administrative Officers and Native Chiefs should take every opportunity of inculcating among the natives, habits of industry either inside or outside the Reserves is obviously right, and not open to criticism. But beyond taking steps to place at the disposal of employers information as to sources of labour available for voluntary recruitment, the Government officials will, in future, take no part in recruiting labour for private employment.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Oldham to Viscount Milner, December 21, 1920, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

⁴⁸ Buell, I, p. 335.

⁴⁹ Despatch to the Officer Administering the Government of Kenya relating to Native Labour, September 5, 1921, Cmd. 1509.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

Oldham was disappointed that Churchill did not appoint a Royal Commission to settle the whole question of British policy in Kenya. However, the immediate issue of forced labour, albeit a subsidiary one, was settled, though, in practice, different governors did more than encourage Africans to go out and provide cheap labour to the settlers. Oldham, alone, anticipated the White Paper of 1923. Already, the British Government was about to solve the question of the Indians in Kenya, and he was afraid that the interests of the Africans would be lost sight of. In 1921, September 7, he wrote the Bishop of Zanzibar:

We are not going to get a Royal Commission. Churchill prefers doing things off his own bat. I pointed out [to Major Wood] that while we have no thought at present of urging that the natives should be given political rights for which they are not fitted, the concessions which are about to be made in Kenya Colony to the Indian community raise in a quite definite way the position in the future of the native population which is far the largest of the three communities. It is essential that we should have a definite policy designed gradually to train the natives in responsibility for the management of their own affairs and to provide for the expression of native opinion on matters which affect their life.⁵¹

The problem of forced labour was not the only one that the Africans of Kenya faced after World War I. The labour circulars apart, the Africans had already, by 1920, been reduced to a wage-earner through high taxation and the kipande system. N. Leys has

⁵¹Oldham to Bishop of Zanzibar, September 7, 1921, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

summed up the effects, dramatically. He wrote:

For the time, indeed, direct taxation of the poorest people in the colony, up to the limit of endurance, and a Registration Ordinance that makes evasion of wage-earning impossible seem to have solved the labour problem in Kenya.⁵²

Men, women and children were driven out of their homes to work for private employers, in order to earn the money to pay their tax. At the same time, the Africans were dogged by other problems. Almost suddenly the value of the rupee which was the standard currency of the colony since 1898 began to rise. Its standard value since then had been one shilling and four pence sterling;⁵³ but in 1920, it rose to the value of two shillings and ten pence.⁵⁴ It was stabilized, by the Colonial Office in 1920, on the request of the settlers, at two shillings.⁵⁵ In June, it had again fallen to the value of less than two shillings, and by February of the following year it had fallen to the value of one shilling and five pence.⁵⁶ The fluctuating value of the rupee would not, by itself,

⁵²Norman Leys, Kenya, 2nd ed. (London, 1925), p. 195.

⁵³Welbourn, p. 121. ⁵⁴Ross, pp. 202-204

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 203. ⁵⁶Welbourn, p. 121.

have affected the Africans very much, since the African did not, after all, depend on a money economy for his livelihood. For the most part, the African was dependent upon subsistence agriculture for the necessities of life. The fluctuating rate of the rupee, however, led to smuggling; both Indians and Europeans began to smuggle money into the country. The government clamped down on this, and withdrew from legal tender all the one rupee notes imported from India.⁵⁷ The sudden withdrawal of the notes, however, dealt a heavy blow to the Africans, and directly affected them more than it did the smugglers. The government had imported thousands of the notes to pay the wages of African ex-service men who had returned from service in Tanganyika after the War. Their wages were already overdue. However, the tragedy was that payment began, and continued, for seven days before the notes suddenly ceased to be legal tender.⁵⁸ When the notes were suddenly withdrawn, many hundreds of Africans already possessed them. They discovered that they were valueless only when they began to use them. It is true the government tried to replace them with silver rupees, but, all the same, little was done to replace those already in the hands of the Afri-

⁵⁷ Ross, p. 204.

⁵⁸ Ross, p. 204.

cans; and these were now valueless. This was an injustice that they could never forget.

Following closely upon this, there came the postwar slump which was, of course, worldwide. The settlers, however, sought to combat it by reducing, among other things, the wages of their African employees by one third, and applied pressure on the government to do so with their employees. Only the Director of Public Works, McGregor Ross, refused to reduce the wages of the employees of his department.⁵⁹

At the forefront of these problems was that of land, whose security from alienation for European settlement caused the African great concern and anxiety. The alienation of the best land in Kenya, that was set in motion by the 1902 Act, reached its peak after the war. During the war, by the Crown Lands Ordinance of 1915, the Africans were reduced to being tenants-at-will of the Crown, and their land became Crown Land and liable for alienation.⁶⁰ In 1919, the Kenya Government invaded the Nandi Reserve and chopped off 100 acres of land for the ex-Soldier Settlement Scheme. Similar steps were taken at Nyeri,

⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 219-220.

⁶⁰Harlow, Chilver and Smith, History of East Africa, p. 680.

where land was alienated from the Kikuyu for the same scheme.

Reports from District Commissioners in the field expressed widespread suspicion about government action, due to the insecurity of their title to their land. From Ulu, Ukambani, which had been unusually calm, the District Commissioner reported in 1919 that

the present insecurity of their title to their Reserves followed by rumours of impending further alienation to Europeans cannot be expected to produce anything else but suspicion against the general good faith of the Government. The sooner the Akamba are given legal title deeds to the Reserves the better.⁶¹

If this was the reaction of the Akamba, it was even more so among the Kikuyu on the highlands. The Africans became worried at so gross an infringement on the right to their own land. Their first attempt was to turn to the courts, but here they found no solution. Already, the High Court had ruled against the Masai claim that, by the treaty of 1904, they had the right to Laikipia from where they were being evicted.⁶²

In 1904, the Masai had been forced out of the Rift Valley to make room for the European settlement on the railway line.

⁶¹ Ulu (Machakos) District, Annual Report, 1919, DC / MKS / 1/1/15, Nairobi Archives.

⁶² Charles Bowring to Harcourt, June 27, 1913, C. O. 533 / 119 enclosing Civil Case No. 91 of 1912, P. R. O.

Two reserves were then marked out for them, the first one, Laikipia, and the second south of the railroad. A treaty was concluded between the Masai and the Government which made the arrangement binding, and ensured that the two reserves would not be open to any European settlement. By 1910, Europeans soon began to demand the removal of the Masai from Laikipia to make room for settlement. In 1911, the Masai were forced out of Laikipia and concentrated into one reserve, although they refused to move before they had contested their case in court, on the grounds that they were not bound by the second treaty, since they had not signed it. The Masai lost the case, that served as an example of the insecurity of the Africans with regard to their land.

In 1920, Thomas Mwathi of Dagoretti sued for the ownership of his land. Ruling against such a claim the judge said

in the hinterland [of Kenya] the only source of an indefensible root of title is the Crown and that although the Government may for reasons of policy have elected not to contest cases in which another title has been advanced, they have never varied from the standpoint that the right is in the Crown.⁶³

⁶³ Secretariat Circulars re "Native Kiama Case (Dagoretti) claim by Thomas Mwathi, January 8, 1920, Secretariat Circular, 1/1/1013, Nairobi Archives.

The final blow came in 1921, when the Kikuyu sued for the recognition of the Githaka, the Kikuyu system of land ownership. J. W. Bath, Chief Advocate of the Supreme Court, ruled that the Githaka could not be recognized.⁶⁴ The Kikuyu claimed that they had purchased the land from the Wandorobo, the original occupiers, who lived on hunting. The highlands then were covered with forest. After the Kikuyu had paid the Wandorobo thousands of goats and cattle, they cleared the forests to give land on which they grew cereals and vegetables. Bishop Hannington was able to buy a lot of vegetables, fruits and food from the Kikuyu when he stopped there in 1885. The Wandorobo intermarried with the Kikuyu, and the rest of the forest land that was not actually purchased from them, with cattle, passed on to the descendants resulting from such intermarriage, or paid some of it as dowry for their Kikuyu wives. In the course of time, more Kikuyu came. They helped to clear the forest land already owned by the earlier Kikuyu, and for this service they were allowed to settle on the land. Soon, all the forest was cleared and where once there was virgin forest there were now stretches of cultivated land, all of which had become the property of the Kikuyu, either by purchase from the

⁶⁴Native Affairs, Civil Case No. 626 of 1921, Native Affairs--General Policy, PC/CP 6/4/2, Nairobi Archives.

Ndorobo or from the earlier Kikuyu. Hence, it is clear that land was owned by individuals and this is, in Kikuyu, the Githaka. The Githaka owner was, in fact, the father of the family, upon whose death the land was divided between the sons. Such land could not be sold to non-Kikuyu. Giving his opinion that annulled the Githaka, J. W. Bath said, in Civil Case No. 626,

In my view the effect of Crown Lands Ordinance 1915, the Kenya [Annexation] Order in Council 1920, by which no native private rights were preserved, and the Kenya Colony Order-in-Council 1921 inter alia to vest land reserved for the use of a native tribe in the Crown. If that be so then all native rights in such reserved land, wherever they were under the Githaka system disappeared and that natives in occupation of such Crown lands became tenants-at-will of the Crown of the land actually occupied which would presumably include land on which huts were built with appertenances and land cultivated by the occupier--such land would include the fallow.⁶⁵

There is no doubt that the Kikuyu had a well-developed system of ownership of land. Harry Leakey, C. M. S., J. W. Arthur and R. Barlow, both of C. S. M., went into the Githaka in the first decade. They explained to the government that there was a well-developed system of land ownership in Kikuyu, but no consideration was taken about it when land was being alienated for

⁶⁵Ibid.

private farming.⁶⁶ However, nothing resulted from their attempts, and fear of the insecurity of the land that belonged to the Africans grew. Arthur had pointed out in 1920 that nothing would cause as much unrest as land alienation.⁶⁷ And, as late as 1934, they were pointing out the same thing with regard to the African unrest caused by the insecurity of their land. R. G. Calderwood, C.S.M., wrote:

[we] the missionaries are convinced that there will be no real peace till this vital problem of security is tackled with more courage and discernment than has been shown in the past.⁶⁸

The Africans, the Kikuyu in particular, appreciated the attempts of the missionaries when they went into the Githaka system. But by 1921, J. W. Bath wiped out any hope that the government might recognize the Githaka and give them title deeds. In most cases they did not trust the missions because they too held land. The C.S.M. held 3,000 acres of the best land in the heart of the Kikuyu, and the Roman Catholics held also 3,000 acres of the best land at Nyeri. The C.S.M. only seem to have recognized that the land they held was part of an extensive Githaka in 1926 when they went

⁶⁶ Arthur to Oldham, November 22, 1920, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

⁶⁷ Arthur to Oldham, December 20, 1920, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

⁶⁸ R. G. M. Calderwood to the Secretary, C.S.M., Arthur Papers, Edinburgh University Archives.

into it. "The whole estate," wrote Arthur in 1926, "was originally part of the extensive Githaka belonging to Munyua."⁶⁹

In the same report, he further stated

[the Githaka] was subdivided between other members of this family. . . Mbari ya Hinga and Mbari ya Maturi. Of the members of this owning family there remain on the estate today. . . Mbari ya Hinga three and Mbari ya Maturi six. In addition there still remain sixty householders who were there when the Mission acquired the land.

The above sixty nine original occupiers have about fifty unmarried adult sons, who under the Githaka system would normally be conceded to have a claim to occupy it. . . and would succeed to their parents occupation.⁷⁰

It was not until 1935, almost ten years after, that the Mission belatedly returned 2,400 acres of their estate to the Kikuyu who claimed it. "In recognition of native land rights, only realized in later years," wrote Arthur, "[the C.S.M.] returned to the natives no less than 2,400 acres of most valuable land."⁷¹

The immediate problems of the war made the Africans aware more than ever before that it was useless for them to

⁶⁹ Arthur to McLachlan, "Church of Scotland Mission Estate," August 31, 1926, Arthur Papers, University of Edinburgh. Archives.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ "Kibwezi Jubilee, 1891-1941," (typed manuscript), p. 14, Arthur Papers, University of Edinburgh. Archives.

rely on either the government or the missions to solve these problems for them. By 1920, their economic, social and political problems were becoming critical. They, therefore, turned to themselves and began to form political associations. In 1921 was formed the Young Kikuyu Association, under Harry Thuku, then a telephone operator who was a product of the Gospel Missionary Society.⁷² The Association was formed to fight the increase in taxation, the introduction of the kipande, the reduction of wages, forced labour, land tenure and for better education.⁷³ In essence, the Association embodied all the problems of the Africans in Kenya.

Harry Thuku campaigned for membership, not only in his own Kikuyu country, but in the neighbouring Ukambani⁷⁴ and Kavirondo in Kisumu.⁷⁵ Although the Young Kikuyu Association was essentially Kikuyu, yet Thuku had realized from the beginning, the importance of drawing support from outside Kikuyu.

⁷²Harlow, Chilver and Smith, History of East Africa, pp. 293-294.

⁷³Ibid.

⁷⁴Ulu (Machakos) District, Annual Report, 1919, DC/MKS/1/1/15, Nairobi Archives.

⁷⁵Hooper to Oldham, March 4, 1922, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

The use of Swahili, which the Association adopted, especially in writing to the press,⁷⁶ certainly emphasized more its attempt to appeal to and to reach a more broadly-based audience than otherwise. Swahili was, of course, spoken in all the cosmopolitan centers and the coastal areas. The Luo, in Nyanza province, were also literate in Swahili. In fact, it was more in Kikuyu, where Swahili was unlikely to be broadly understood, that the adoption of Swahili would have counted against the movement, mainly with the older generation. However, these were those who were less enthusiastic with the movement. In any case, it would have been unwise for Thuku to have used any other language other than Kikuyu across Kikuyu country.

At a political rally held at Dagoretti, June 24, 1921,⁷⁷ which the Chief Native Commissioner, government officials and missionaries attended, Harry Thuku raised the question of Kikuyu land which was alienated and the security of their land, forced labour, high taxation, reduction of wages, the kipande

⁷⁶ Harry Leakey to Mrs. Leakey, Personal letters of Harry Leakey, 1909-1923 in the private collections of Mrs. J. L. Beecher, Nairobi. (Cited hereafter as Mrs. Beecher's Private Collections.)

⁷⁷ "Memorandum of Grievances presented by the Young Kikuyu Association to the Chief Native Commissioner," June 24, 1921, Arthur Papers, Edinburgh University Archives.

system and education.⁷⁸ Thuku was forced to resign as a telephone operator but he was not deterred.⁷⁹ Indeed, this gave him more time to campaign and to tour the whole of the highlands. Membership grew by odds; by March of the following year, missionaries were soon reporting that Thuku had a tremendous following. Leakey was anxious and feared that there would soon be rebellion: "and unless something is done he will ruin the Kikuyu cause, as, if he got them to rise, the Government might punish them by driving them out of their precious land."⁸⁰ Already the movement and Thuku's speeches had become distinctly anti-European and anti-missionary. It could not be otherwise, for were they not the cause of all the misery over the country?

McGregor Ross has said:

Thuku went. . . towards Fort Hall, and his speeches became more violent. A distinct anti-European note began to appear. They had helped the European in the War and this is what the Fort Hall natives had got as a reward--increased taxation up to 8 rupees, an all round cut in wages, and registration, under which some had been fined 10 rupees when caught without the kipande even when working on their own garden

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Harlow, Chilber and Smith, History of East Africa, p. 294.

⁸⁰ Leakey to Mrs. Leakey, March 12, 1922, Mrs. Beecher's Private Collections, Nairobi.

plots in the Reserve.⁸¹

Most of the missionaries believed that Indians were behind Thuku and his movement. In March, 1922, J. Arthur, Handley Hooper and Harry Leakey had reported that the Indians were behind him; they even said the Indians were using him for their own ends. Harry Leakey said that Thuku had all the dissatisfied Indian community and their money behind him--"He goes up Fort Hall district in a magnificent car."⁸² Indeed, it is not difficult to see that both the Africans and the Indians had enough cause to come together to help each other in this hour of crisis. Their interests had been subordinated to those of the Europeans. Of the two, the Africans fared the worst, but they shared common grievances in some areas, as for instance, in land allocation, the civil service and the towns. But the discontents of the Africans had reached so high a peak that they did not need outside motivation to provoke them into open rebellion. Some missionaries, like Handley Hooper, C.M.S., saw in the anti-missionary movement the approaching end of the work of the missions in Kikuyu and with it, of course, Christian influence. Hooper wrote:

⁸¹Ross, p. 227.

⁸²Leakey to Mrs. Leakey, March 12, 1922, Mrs. Beecher's Private Collections, Nairobi.

in this district the future of mission work trembles in the balance. Harry Thuku, mouthpiece of a clever Indian lawyer, is playing a very hazardous game. He has created tremendous enthusiasm, not only in Kikuyu but Kavirondo and amongst Mohamedans as well as Christians. . . a big element of the Christian community, the mystical section are seeing in him a deliverer of the prophetic type, and religious favour is contributing to his popularity.⁸³

The anti-missionary nature of the movement, the majority of whose members were in the missions, or had passed through them, was a great blow to the missionaries. If they had been wiser and more imaginative, they would have paused to take stock of their work and their role. Thuku lumped the missionaries and settlers together, and accused the missionaries of being the agents of the settlers.⁸⁴ Indeed, such an accusation was not altogether unfounded. This is the view held by almost every Kikuyu. On this view, the Kikuyu saying Gutiri mubea na muthungu (there is no difference between a missionary and a settler) is symbolically true. This is certainly so with regard to land. Writing as recently as 1965, James Ngugi has said:

Take Siriana Mission for example, the men of God came peacefully. They were given a place. Now see what has happened. They invited their brothers

⁸³Hooper to Oldham, March 4, 1922, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

⁸⁴Ibid.

to come and take all the land. Our country is invaded. And this hut tax. . . .⁸⁵

The C. M. S. and the C. S. M., from whom Harry Thuku drew a majority of his followers, were alarmed at the popularity of the movement on their missions. Arthur, of the C. S. M., was taken by surprise at the speed that Kikuyu political ferment had developed. On March 14, the night before Harry Thuku was arrested, Arthur wrote:

The development of the native peoples of Kenya in one short year and a half is simply past thinking. They are almost now able to safeguard themselves against oppression and exploitation. What is much more to be feared is native risings led by young educated Christians and resulting in bloodshed and serious setbacks to their whole life. There are political movements being set agoing by natives of Africa under Thuku. . . and propaganda being carried on among all the tribes especially in the semi-educated soil to be found among the young scholars at our schools--these we think are being secretly worked by Indians for their own ends. Thuku has now got hold of the majority of young Kikuyu Christianity embracing all the C. M. S. boys around Hooper's neighbourhood, our own boys at Tumutumu but not the older Christians of Canon Leakey or our own lads here. These latter however are called by the others Judases. The movement is anti-European and anti-missionary.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ James Ngugi, The River Between (London, 1965), p. 74.

⁸⁶ Arthur to Oldham, March 14, 1922, [Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

It is not surprising that political consciousness among the Kikuyu, indeed among the Africans of Kenya, found its primary source among the graduates of the missions, and among mission adherents. Often, too, the centers of political ferment were at first the missions. It was in the missions that the Africans tasted education, attended church services and became Christian, even though this was often in name only. But this identification with the European civilization, through Christianity and education, did not solve their problems. Mission education, for which they were primarily attracted to the missions, had brought them neither prosperity nor responsibility, even within the hierarchy of the missions. They saw no bright future for themselves in the period immediately after the war save economic, social and political discrimination at the hands of the Europeans, be they missionaries or settlers. This was the more disappointing because the missionaries and Europeans lived in luxury; and the settlers paid hardly any tax.⁸⁷ The Africans were finding it extremely difficult to draw the line between the settlers and the missionaries. The association between the missionaries and the settlers emphasized their similarities, as Europeans, rather than their differences. In vital areas, the semblance was striking. The Africans were pointing

⁸⁷ Leys, pp. 336-337.

out, very openly, that the missionaries held land and wanted cheap labour. They attended political meetings of the Convention of Associations and met socially.

It is no wonder that the Africans saw no other salvation save to form their own political Association, and to seek redress in the political arena, either peacefully or violently. They had an example before them in the Convention of Associations, which was a combination, formed in 1908 by the politically active settlers of Kenya, of smaller organizations.⁸⁸ Since its formation, it had nothing but success in securing to the settlers all that they wanted. They had also the East African Indian National Congress, formed in 1911, as a combination of previous Indian Associations in East Africa.

Two forces were working hard to undermine Thuku's influence and to cripple the movement. First, the missionaries tried to influence the movement in an attempt to play their grievances down and, according to J. W. Arthur, "to get them out of the hands of these Indian extremists who are merely using them for their own ends."⁸⁹ When they failed to gain an influence in the Y. K. A.,

⁸⁸ Harlow, Chilver and Smith, History of East Africa, p. 283.

⁸⁹ Arthur to Oldham, March 14, 1922, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

they actively backed the conservative Kiyuyu Association. Organized in 1920 mainly by chiefs but certainly with the backing and support of the missionaries and the government, its program was primarily concerned with matters concerning tribal chiefs and with the land problems.⁹⁰ As such, it proved to be a great handicap to the progressive Young Kikuyu Association, and later on to the Kikuyu Central Association. It was not surprising that it became conservative because of the influence of the missionaries and of the chiefs, themselves, who came to see progress as loss of power and influence that they had gained from the colonial situation. This set them against the young generation, and began the long struggle that was to end with the slaughter of many chiefs during the Mau Mau movement.

In 1922, Harry Leakey was able to report that the Kikuyu Association was absolutely loyal, and that it had denounced Thuku and his movement.⁹¹ Harry Leakey actually referred to the conservative Kikuyu Association as "our"⁹² Kikuyu Association, which clearly shows that it had become more the missionaries' party than the Africans' whose interest it was supposed to serve. Chiefs

⁹⁰ Leakey to Mrs. Leakey, February 24, 1922, Mrs. Beecher's Private Collections, Nairobi.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

Koinange, Josia and Filipino Karanja, apparently the nominal leaders of the Kikuyu Association, toured the highlands with the District Commissioner to popularize their movement and at the same time to discredit Thuku's Young Kikuyu Association.⁹³ Harry Thuku on his part attacked them as stooges.

"He has issued so many scurrilous leaflets in Kiswahili," wrote Leakey, "one slanging Koinange and Josia for refusing him, another against Simeon Kalime our native pastor, others against missions generally."⁹⁴

The Kikuyu Association was a typical example of the sort of local political associations that most of the British Protestant missionaries on the highlands wanted to organize. The Association, however, did not become popular with the Kikuyu, since it served no useful purpose. According to Handley Hooper, C. M. S. Kahuhia, such associations were not to be official bodies but would work with the knowledge of the government as a safety valve.⁹⁵ This amply shows that their primary motive was to

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Harry Leakey to Mrs. Leakey, March 12, 1922, Mrs. Blecher's Private Collections, Nairobi.

⁹⁵ Hooper to Oldham, August 1, 1923 and March 14, 1923, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

help the Africans to let off steam rather than to redress their social and political grievances. The Kikuyu were, however, too militant and too independent to be diverted easily from their main targets, and the missionaries did not succeed in molding their political associations the way they wanted. The missionaries also failed to divert them, as they did in Nyanza Province, from the burning political issues of the day in order to concentrate on purely welfare associations. Only in Nyanza Province did the C. M. S. succeed in organizing the Young Kavirondo Association in 1923, into the Kavirondo Tax-payers' Welfare Association.⁹⁶ This was the achievement of Archdeacon Owen, C. M. S., who, with the backing of the government, formed the Tax-payers' Association the same year.⁹⁷ Owen was at the head of the Association as founder and President. As President, he was able to channel the Association into purely welfare objectives and into political goals as it suited his purposes. This, however, deprived the Africans of the C. M. S., at Nyanza Province, of the initiative and leadership in an association which was primarily concerned with them.

⁹⁶Ibid.

⁹⁷Hooper to Oldham, April 11, 1929, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

The other force, but a more formidable one, was that the missionaries, having failed to gain an influence in Thuku's movement, worked directly, but secretly to undermine it. It was at Weithaga C.M.S. station that the C.M.S. hatched a plot to do so.⁹⁸ It secretly manouvered with the officials of Y.K.A., who were C.M.S. Christians, to bring the movement into the open. Already the C.M.S. was alarmed at the popularity of the movement among their Christians. From Weithaga C.M.S. stations, Thuku drew an excessively large following, second only to the crowd he drew at Fort Hall. These were not interested spectators but active members of the Y.K.A. The C.M.S., in collaboration with the officials of the movement, gathered the names of the leaders and sworn affidavits from them to persuade the government to order the early arrest of Thuku and the leading officials of the Association.⁹⁹ The Weithaga C.M.S. log book record for 1922 clearly shows that this is what the C.M.S. did.¹⁰⁰ The names of the C.M.S. Christians who were officials of Y.K.A. are not recorded. It is quite clear from the same record that those who gave the information to the C.M.S. mission-

⁹⁸Weithaga Log Book, C.M.S. April 1922, p. 99, Bishop's Archives, Nairobi.

⁹⁹Ibid. ¹⁰⁰Ibid.

aries were not aware of the motives of the C. M. S.

Harry Thuku would have been arrested, sooner or later, with or without the help of the missionaries. It is pertinent to note, however, that the missions used their position to effect his early arrest and the repression of the movement. They adopted the same methods during the Mau Mau movement. The members of the Y. K. A. were aware that the missionaries would work against them.

Harry Thuku was arrested on March 15, 1922,¹⁰¹ as a result of a speech he had made at Weithaga the previous month. This undoubtedly substantiates the role the missions played to effect his arrest. More serious, and resulting from the arrest, thousands of his followers, apparently perturbed at his arrest, gathered around the police lines at Nairobi where he was detained before he was deported to Kismayu. The events that led to the subsequent firing at the crowd have not been fully and justifiably explained. Oral evidences of the events are also difficult to obtain, due, no doubt, to the tension that had mounted before the firing opened and the panic that followed when the police fired. There is little doubt, however, that the government bears the

¹⁰¹Leakey to Mrs. Leakey, March 16, 1922, Mrs. Beecher's Private Collections, Nairobi.

blame for the mobilization of the police and the army to deal with an unarmed crowd. This is the more so especially when the crowd did not get out of hand and "apparently," Leakey reported, "there was no kind of attempt to molest Europeans."¹⁰² It is true that the crowd that gathered outside the police lines where Thuku was detained was overly large, but this should have been expected. Altogether, twenty-five Africans died in the ensuing riot.¹⁰³

From their narrow point of view, the missionaries were bound to interpret this as a failure on their part to teach their converts to be loyal to the government, and to them, of course. However, a number of them admitted that the Africans had genuine grievances.

Harry Thuku was deported to Kismayu until 1925, when he was removed to Marsabit. Two others, George Mugekenye and Waiyango, were deported to the coast.¹⁰⁴ However, the hut tax was reduced from 16 to 12 shillings the previous year, labour for children and women was completely forbidden, and the one-

¹⁰²Ibid. ¹⁰³Ross, p. 233.

¹⁰⁴"A Short History of the Kikuyu Province, 1911-1927," p. 9, PC/CP/1/1/2, Nairobi Archives.

third reduction in wages was also dropped.¹⁰⁵ At the same time, immediately after Thuku was deported to Kismayu, the Young Kikuyu Association was proscribed by the government. Africal political activity, however did not die out, for the rank and file of the Association still continued to sing the political songs, attacking the chiefs as stooges of the government. They also attacked the settlers as well as the missionaries.¹⁰⁶ The emphasis of their attack now shifted. The chiefs and missionaries were now attacked for causing Harry Thuku to be deported. The government soon banned the singing of the songs, apparently on the initiative of J. W. Arthur who said the songs and the dances were immoral. On the surface, there was formed the East African Association centred on Nairobi, so that political activity after the proscription of the Young Kikuyu Association did not collapse. Grievances of land, education and political representation still remained, however. For a time, radical and militant political activity among the Kikuyu went underground, only to revive again, in 1925, with the formation of the Kikuyu Central Association.

¹⁰⁵ Harlow, Chilver and Smith, History of East Africa, pp. 356-357.

¹⁰⁶ Arthur to Oldham, November 17, 1922, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

About the same time, Daudi Maina wa Kiragu formed an independent African Church in the Fort Hall District.¹⁰⁷ Fort Hall was the district where Thuku had a following second only to Nairobi town. It was the discontent with the education in the missions, which was becoming widespread across Kikuyu land, that spearheaded the beginning of this independent African church. F. Welbourn claims that there was no apparent connection between the Thuku movement and the beginning of the church. On the contrary, there was, for both the political discontent and the discontent with the education of the missions were part of the same movement. Communication to the author on this question suggests that both were the same.¹⁰⁸ The missionaries, however, refuted any connection for obvious reasons. They wanted to keep any such rebellion from their own church separate from political matters, and to suggest any connection between the two would have been against their interests. On the side of the African leaders of the church, it was certainly to their best interest to deny any connection between the church and the Thuku move-

¹⁰⁷Welbourn, p. 144.

¹⁰⁸Communication from Grant, October 15, 1966. Recollections of his father, and interview with P. M. Koinange, August 19 and 20, 1966.

ment. Kikuyus are, after all, remarkably secretive about their organizations and associations. Even now, Grant Kamenju has suggested, those who were connected with it would not openly say so. He did not suggest, however, that any of the members took an oath to deny that they would not reveal it. However, we cannot rule out this possibility.

The fear expressed by Handley Hooper, that the work of the missions was trembling in the balance, was fully justified. Not only was there a political ferment against them, but there was also the beginning of an African independent church which directly threatened the existence and the work of the missions. What was worse was that their own Christians formed and led the movement against them. For the moment, the independent church went underground, as the political movement went underground when Thuku was deported and the Y. K. A. legally banned.

Harry Thuku's visit to Ukambani, it would appear, was not altogether unrewarding, although the District Commissioner, Ukambani, dismissed his visit as a complete failure.¹⁰⁹ In his Annual Report for 1922, the District Commissioner reported that the Thuku riots at Nairobi had made no impact on the district and

¹⁰⁹ Ulu District, Annual Report, 1922, DC/MKS/1/1/15, Nairobi Archives.

"all attempts made by him to enlist the support of Ukamba failed."¹¹⁰ However, in the same report he reported that the district was disturbed by the activities of a native of Kilungu.¹¹¹ About the beginning of the year, Ndonye wa Kati began his own movement which was partly political and partly religious.¹¹² He was reported to have gathered a large number of people to whom he preached a curious doctrine. His reference to the Bible inevitably suggests the religious aspect of the movement. His popular platform was the abolition of hut and poll tax, the cessation of all road work, the expulsion of Europeans from the country, and as a prophet, his own supremacy.¹¹³

Many people were reported to have attended his meetings to hear his teachings.¹¹⁴ The administration was alarmed and so ordered his arrest. Ndonye was arrested and put under medical observation for a while.¹¹⁵ He was subsequently released, apparently because there was nothing wrong with him medically, but this soon enhanced his popularity and that of his teachings.¹¹⁶ Just as it appeared that this would crystallize into either a religious movement or a political-religious movement, Ndonye was arrested

¹¹⁰Ibid. ¹¹¹Ibid. ¹¹²Ibid. ¹¹³Ibid.

¹¹⁴Ibid. ¹¹⁵Ibid. ¹¹⁶Ibid.

again and deported to Lamu.¹¹⁷ And so ended the movement.

There was a similarity in the political platform of both Harry Thuku and Ndonge wa Kati. They both, like Daudi Maina wa Kirangu, saw Europeans as a source of all troubles in the country and so preached for their expulsion. Daudi Maina wa Kirangu aimed at evicting the missionaries out of the country by establishing a church, and although this was not explicit, by taking control of the schools. However, the similarity of the two movements emphasizes more the problems of the African of Kenya than the visit of Thuku to Ukambani. They had come to realize that the solution to their problems lay with them alone and with no one else. From now on, they increasingly became as suspicious of the missions and of the missionaries, as of any other European in the country.

Meanwhile, the Indian question impinged on the scene, to give breathing space to the Africans. In the Indian question, the settlers and the missions used the Africans to win their battle over franchise and immigration against the Indians. The Indians used the same device to put forward their claim for a common electoral roll and unrestricted immigration. What is probably more relevant here is that in 1923 it became necessary for the

¹¹⁷Ibid.

settlers and the missions to put the interests of the Africans before theirs in order to win their interests.

Commercial contact between India and East Africa dates back many centuries. With this trade contact there were, of course, movements of Indians to the East coast of Africa; some came and left seasonally, but a number settled to become merchants and bankers. Only in 1896 did large numbers of Indians come as immigrant labourers. Then, over 13,000 were brought in as coolies to provide the cheap labour for the construction of the Kenya-Uganda railway, 1896-1901. After the railway was completed, they were given an offer to settle in Kenya or a free passage to return to India. Some Indian merchants had followed up the railway, establishing maduka (shops) on the railroad points that later became stations and commercial centres. Many Indians took the offer of land that the Colonial Office gave them, and stayed only to be joined by more immigrants who came in with the opening of commercial opportunities in the country. By 1923, they were estimated to have numbered 23,000 and by 1926, 30,000.¹¹⁸

Although the Indians were given an offer of land, it was quite clear, from 1902, that they were not to be treated on equal terms with the Europeans. In particular, the highlands were not to be

¹¹⁸Buell, I, pp. 288-289.

polluted by opening them up to non-whites. Charles Eliot excluded the Indians from acquiring land in the highlands in 1903.¹¹⁹ Although the Indians protested, nothing was done, and governors succeeding Charles Eliot followed his policy of discrimination in land grants. It was not in land grants only that the Indians were discriminated against, but in administration, the legislature and in the new developing towns of Kenya.

Matters came to the forefront after the war when General Northey, the governor, announced that the interests of the Europeans in the colony were to be paramount. In 1919, the legislature of the country provided for eleven elected European representatives and only two Asians, who were to be nominated by the governor.¹²⁰ In 1921, the Indian position was strengthened by the declaration of the Imperial Conference meeting in London which resolved that the status of the Indian in Kenya should be equal to that of any British subject.

To be sure, the government of India had drawn the attention of the Colonial Office to the discrimination in land, in the franchise and in the residential areas that the Indians suffered, in

¹¹⁹Harlow, Chilver and Smith, History of East Africa, pp. 271-272.

¹²⁰Buell, I, p. 291.

Kenya, as early as 1914. Resulting from the resolution of the Imperial Conference, and from, also, the recommendation of a Joint Standing Committee of Parliament on Indian Affairs, the Colonial Office recommended the amendment of the Kenya Ordinance that was passed in 1919, which allowed for the appointment of four Indians, instead of the two, in the Legislative Council. At the same time, the British government had appointed a committee of the two Under Secretaries at the Colonial Office and at the Indian Office to study the question. The Committee, the Wood-Winterton Committee, issued its report in 1922 recommending a common electoral roll, and a non-discriminatory educational and property test as qualification for voters.¹²¹ The Committee also recommended that immigration should be open to Indians. At the same time the Committee endorsed the exclusion of the Indians from the highlands.

The settlers in Kenya were hysterical at so great a concession to the Indians. Such a concession, they believed, would undermine the supremacy of their interests in Kenya. They organized protest meetings and there was even talk of a coup d'etat.¹²² The

¹²¹Ibid., pp. 291-294.

¹²²Roland Oliver, The Missionary Factor in East Africa (London, 1952), p. 258.

Indians answered back by similar mass meetings in which they made it clear that, as British subjects, they wanted political equality with the settlers, and unrestricted immigration. The immediate outburst of anger and protest that the publication of the Wood-Winterton recommendations precipitated, led the Colonial Office to suspend the implementation of the recommendations. Of yet greater significance, it led to a Conference at the Colonial Office in London to which the settlers and the Indians sent delegates. J. W. Arthur attended, to speak for the interests of the Africans.¹²³ The Representative Council of the Protestant Alliance authorised Arthur to press that the interests of the Africans must be upheld, and that their economic, moral and spiritual future should be safeguarded. Arthur was also to press the Colonial Office to set up a Native Trust Board in Kenya, on which would sit missionaries and unofficials;¹²⁴ there was no mention of African representation, however.

The British Protestant missions were deeply involved in the issue. Both the Europeans and the Africans for whom they

¹²³ Arthur to Mclachland, March 8, 1923, Arthur Papers, University of Edinburgh Archives.

¹²⁴ Minutes of the Representative Council of the Protestant Alliance, March 6 & 7, 1923, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

were special trustees, would be affected with the outcome of the issue, one way or the other. Common sense alone dictated that it would certainly have been in the best interests of the British Protestant Missionary Societies if such an outcome was in favour of the Europeans. Most of them supported the cause of the settlers.¹²⁵ Almost all of them attended meetings of the Convention of Associations to which they were invited as a body either through the Alliance or individually, as Europeans. Although the Alliance had turned down the invitation to become a member of the Convention of Associations, it regularly sent in its representative. In the Convention its representative could not vote but participated fully in the deliberations. Arthur said:

the presence of missionaries in the past has been appreciated by the Convention, decisions have been influenced. . . we have supported the Europeans in the general policy which has been taken up for the sake of the Africans but have urged that we could not come out into the open on the matter without complicating the position not only of Missions in India but of the whole cause of Christianity there.¹²⁶

The Indians or the Africans could not interpret the attendance of the missionaries at such meetings as neutral. McGregor

¹²⁵ Arthur to Mclachlan, March 8, 1923, Arthur Papers, University of Edinburgh. Archives.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

Ross, then the Director of Public Works, noted that the missionaries appeared and spoke at anti-Indian meetings and some, he said, wrote when they could not appear.¹²⁷ He said, "there is little to be said for the missionaries. They have shown only too much eagerness to allow themselves to be stampeded by the fatuous 'Fascists!'"¹²⁸

As a matter of fact, there was division among the British Protestant missions over the Indian issue. Some, like Arthur, felt that, if immigration was open to Indians without restrictions, the type of Indian that would come would be directly against the interests of the Africans. Large numbers of them would come and fill in the lower industrial and clerical jobs that were directly open to the Africans.¹²⁹ Arthur said that most missionaries were perturbed by the type of Indian already in Kenya. He said:

What missionary opinion is focussed on is that the type of Indian influence there is bad. They are no Christian Indians, they are not the respectable Mo-

¹²⁷McGregor Ross to Oldham, April 6, 1923, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

¹²⁸Ibid.

¹²⁹R. S. Heywood to Oldham, January 4, 1922, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

hamedan or Hindu, but the low type of shopkeepers and missionaries practically unanimously say that their influence is bad.¹³⁰

There was also the fear that, if the Indians were given equality with Europeans in jobs, or in anything else, they would swamp everyone by their sheer numerical strength.¹³¹

On the other side, a few progressive missionaries wanted strict immigration restriction on both Europeans and Indians "so that the native might have a chance of coming into his own."¹³² The chief protagonists of this view were Handley Hooper, C.M.S., Kahuhia, and Archdeacon Owen, C.M.S. Kavirondo. Handley Hooper said "[in Kenya] we have enough foreigners to last us a long time"¹³³ while the Archdeacon, in addition, wanted to see direct African representation in the Legislative Council.¹³⁴

Back in England, Oldham at Edinburgh House believed that

¹³⁰ Arthur to Oldham, May 18, 1923, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

¹³¹ Heywood to Oldham, January 4, 1922, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

¹³² Hooper to Oldham, February 14, 1923, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Welbourn, p. 128, cited thereon.

he could use the Indian question to get the British government to declare that Kenya would be developed in the interests of the natives. He felt that the Indian question was only a subsidiary issue in the whole controversy.¹³⁵ What was at stake was whether or not the British government was prepared to give responsible government to the settlers of Kenya, and so hand over the natives to the political control of a minority group who were an interested party. The question, he wrote, "was therefore whether these vast territories are to be administered as an imperial trust for the benefit of the natives. That issue seems to me to dwarf questions of immigration and common franchise."¹³⁶ Handley Hooper had written to say that both Europeans and Indians had recognized that the winning card to hold was a true sense of trusteeship.¹³⁷ On this basis, Oldham was persuaded that the settlers of Kenya could be convinced to agree to the principle of the paramountcy of African interests, and so put off the idea that responsible government

¹³⁵Oldham to Arthur, May 22, 1923 and Oldham to the Bishop of Zanzibar, April 14, 1921 and September 7, 1921.

¹³⁶Oldham to Hooper, February 27, 1923, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

¹³⁷Hooper to Miss Gollock, March 27, 1923, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

would be granted to them. Oldham consulted with Davidson, the Archbishop of Canterbury, who supported his proposal that native interests should be paramount in Kenya.¹³⁸ Both put the proposal to the Duke of Devonshire, then the Colonial Secretary. In July, emerged the famous White Paper which declared:

Primarily Kenya is an African territory, and His Majesty's Government think it necessary definitely to record their considered opinion that the interests of the African natives must be paramount, and that if, and when, those interests and the interests of the immigrant races should conflict, the former should prevail. Obviously the interests of the other communities, Europeans, Indians or Arabs, must severally be safeguarded. Whatever the circumstances in which members of these communities have entered Kenya, there will be no drastic action or reversal of measures already introduced, such as may have been contemplated in some quarters, the result of which might be to destroy or impair the existing interests of those who have already settled in Kenya. But in the administration of Kenya His Majesty's Government regard themselves as exercising a trust, on behalf of the African population, and they are unable to delegate or share this trust, the object of which may be defined as the protection and advancement of the native races.¹³⁹

The Colonial Office rejected the idea of a common electoral roll. The Indians were, however, to elect five representatives, instead of the existing two, to the Legislative Council on a communal

¹³⁸Oldham to the Archbishop of Canterbury, May 25, 1923, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

¹³⁹"Indians in Kenya, 1923," Cmd. 1922, pp. 9-10.

franchise. The Arabs were to have an additional member, one of whom was to be appointed by the governor. There was to be no restriction on immigration and residential segregation was to cease. But the highlands were not to be opened to the Indians or to any other race except the Europeans.

At the same time, the Colonial Office approved the demands of the missionaries to represent the interests of the natives in the Legislative Council of Kenya.¹⁴⁰ The Protestant missionaries began to demand that their representative be appointed to the Legislative Council to represent the interests of the natives, as early as 1919.¹⁴¹ This came at a time when the Africans were forming political associations and were expressing disappointment with the government and the missions. This might be coincidental but it is certainly ironic, especially when the Africans protested that the missionaries were Europeans and could not represent them. In 1921 the Alliance stepped up this pressure on government.¹⁴²

¹⁴⁰Ibid., pp. 12-14.

¹⁴¹Minutes of the Alliance of Protestant Missionary Societies, January 15-17, 1919, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

¹⁴²Minutes of the Alliance of Protestant Missionary Societies, April 25-27, 1921, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

The Alliance based its claim to represent native interests on two groups;¹⁴³ first, the Secretary of State for Colonies, the Alliance claimed, had referred to them as representing native interests, and second, the overwhelming strength of the missionaries in Kenya placed them on a strong constitutional and educational ground to justify such a claim. In the same meeting of the Representative Council (of the Alliance of Missionary Societies), the Alliance put forward an alternative proposal to be acted upon by it. The Alliance proposed that the Representative Council should appoint a small political committee to watch over native interests.¹⁴⁴ Thuku had protested earlier on when Arthur was nominated to speak for the interests of the African in London. He said that "real native opinion can only be represented by educated Natives and not by Missionaries."¹⁴⁵ Jomo Kenyatta, in 1930, reiterated the position of the K.C.A. on this vital issue. He wrote:

Without exception, all Europeans who have so far been selected by the Kenya Government as special representatives of native interests have failed on many occasions to advance or support our interest

¹⁴³Ibid. ¹⁴⁴Ibid.

¹⁴⁵Welbourn, p. 128, cited thereon.

on issues when we both needed and expected their support.¹⁴⁶

This view was also held by the two leading C. M. S. missionaries in Kenya, Archdeacon Owen at Kavirondo and Handley Hooper at Kahuhia C. M. S. station. The Africans were concerned that they were not directly represented on so important an issue. "Any missionary chosen," Owen wrote, "represents European missionary opinion and has no mandate whatever from the Natives."¹⁴⁷ In a letter to Arthur, in 1923, Handley Hooper, C. M. S., denied that any European could claim to be a delegate of the native.¹⁴⁸

Regarding the demands of the Africans to be directly represented in the Legislative Council, Arthur believed that it was premature.¹⁴⁹ He firmly believed that if the Africans were directly mixed up in politics only harm would result. For the time being and for a long time to come he believed that the missionaries knew

¹⁴⁶ Johnstone Kenyatta to Lord Passfield, April 15, 1930, in the Correspondence between the Kikuyu Central Association and the Colonial Office, 1929-1930.

¹⁴⁷ Welbourn, p. 128, cited thereon.

¹⁴⁸ Hooper to Arthur, July 10, 1923, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

¹⁴⁹ Arthur to Chief Native Commissioner, November 17, 1922 (copy), Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

best what the Africans wanted and what was good for them. Surprisingly, this is the view he held in 1928, when the African Christians were making plans to break away from the missions and to set up independent churches and schools. In a sermon to an all-white congregation at All Saints Church, Nairobi, in August 12, 1928, Arthur reiterated this claim in no uncertain terms. He said:

A missionary is an interpreter of the thoughts and aims, first of his own fellow-countrymen to the African, and secondly of the African to the European; he is the intermediary between the races, working in that intervening region between White and Black knowing as European, his own people in their highest and best thoughts and intentions and as a missionary, having acquired knowledge and sympathy with the thoughts and aspirations of the African peoples.¹⁵⁰

The view of the Colonial Office, naturally, became that of the missionaries. The Colonial Office felt that the missionaries could exercise this paternalism, and turned down the demands of the Africans to be represented directly. For the first time, the interests of the Africans were, therefore, to be represented in the Legislative Council, but by a European missionary. Dr. J. W. Arthur, the head of the C.S.M. Kikuyu, and one-time Chairman of the Representative Council of the Kenya Missionary Alliance, was nominated to the Legislative Council for the purpose,

¹⁵⁰ Sermon at All Saints Church, Nairobi (delivered by J. W. Arthur), August 12, 1928, Arthur Papers, University of Edinburgh Archives.

in 1924.¹⁵¹ He was also appointed to the Executive Council of the country, an arrangement which continued until 1944, in spite of African protests. Before 1944, the number of Europeans representing African interests had been raised to two, in 1934, and a retired civil servant. R. W. Hemsted, joined the single European missionary to the Legislative Council. Incidentally, all the missionaries appointed to the Legislative Council to represent African interests came from the C.M.S. and the C.S.M.;¹⁵² two from the C.S.M. and four from the C.M.S. It is interesting, too, that, save J. Britton, C.M.S., who served in Nyanza Province before transferring to Nairobi in 1926, all the rest served among the Kikuyu for the life of their mission work in Kenya.

Finally, in 1944, the first African, Eliud Mathu, a Kikuyu, was nominated to the Legislative Council alongside the missionary representative, as a second member representing African interests.

CHAPTER VII

THE PARTING OF THE WAYS

REBELLION FROM THE CHURCH AND FROM THE SCHOOLS,

1925-1929

One alternative to a purely political solution to African problems lay in the control of education. After the war, the Africans of Kenya were increasingly becoming aware that only education of the best kind possible would open the social and political avenues hitherto closed to them. The opposition of the Africans to mission schools, which had been a predominant feature of mission work in the highlands during the pre-war years, immediately changed; after the war there was universal demand for education. The education that the Africans were pressing for should not be confused with Christian education, however, for this was not what they were anxious to get. Hitherto, of course, the missions controlled and provided all the education, and, except for the three technical schools built at Machakos, Masai and Mombasa, the government had shrugged any responsibility for the education of the Africans.

The education the missions were providing was primarily religious education, with particular emphasis on religious instruction. The main purpose of the missions was, of course, to make them good Christians. Clearly, this kind of education was not going to meet the demands and the needs of their African patients, and it soon became clear that it was not religious education that the Africans wanted after the war. Most of the missionaries noticed this demand and were quick to realize that they did not have the resources to meet the demand. In 1922, Harry Leakey, C.M.S., reported about this overwhelming African desire for education, but at the same time sounded a word of caution as to what the Africans might do if the missions failed to meet their particular needs. He wrote:

You can't realize what it is like now, the young Kikuyu are just crying for education, education, education, education. And if we can't give it them along with Christianity to satisfy their demands they mean to get it otherwise.¹

Harry Thuku put forward, among other things, a demand for education at Dagoretti where he met the Chief Native Commissioner. Education was, in fact, one of the popular platforms of the Kikuyu Asso-

¹Harry Leakey to Mrs. Leakey, October 26, 1922, Personal letters of Harry Leakey, 1909-1923, in the private collections of Mrs. J. I. Beecher, Nairobi. (Cited hereafter as Mrs. Beecher's Private Collections.)

ciation. The beginning of the independent church at Fort Hall was a direct response, by the Africans themselves, to this desire for education. The main cause for the beginning of the church was more the dissatisfaction with the inadequacy of mission education than that the Africans wanted to start their own tribal church. It is also clear that Daudi Maina wa Kiragu did, at least, believe that they could not do much if the control of education was out of their hands.

The Colonial Government was, to say the least, notoriously stingy. It was very unwilling to spend money derived from direct African taxation to provide them with social services. Between 1908 and 1923, the Government had made only token grants to the missions. In 1923, the government was spending only £25,000 out of a total native taxation of £450,000 while it was spending £50,000 on the education of Europeans, who were only a very small minority, from most of this money.²

The new White Paper made it necessary that the government spend more money on social services to the Africans of Kenya worthy of their trusteeship. That year, the Colonial Office agreed on the principal of cooperation between them and the missions for

²J. W. Arthur to Oldham, April 23, 1922, in the Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, International Missionary Council Archives, Edinburgh House, Eaton Gate, London. (Cited hereafter as Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.)

the education of the Africans. Government was to give liberal grants to the missions, and the missions on their part were to bring the schools up to the standards laid down by the government. The formation of the Advisory Boards, first at the Colonial Office then in the various overseas territories, was a step towards the centralization of the educational effort, and it was also a mark of the urgency of the situation. Grants were made to the missions upon fulfilling the conditions laid down by the government, and it is true that grants-in-aid to the missions increased substantially from 1924 on.

The situation in Kenya, unlike that in Uganda, Tanganyika and on the West Coast, in Nigeria and Ghana (then Gold Coast) where there was no settler community with political and economic power' needed special treatment. In Kenya, there was a sizable settler community which, since the first decade of the century, had become the deciding factor in determining the direction of local policy in Kenya. In other words, power lay in their hands and continued to do so even after 1923 when, under the White Paper of that year, it was stated that the interests of the native population were not to be subordinated to those of the immigrant races. This, however, proved to be theoretical. Under these circumstances, the Colonial Government and the

Government of Kenya should not have evaded taking direct responsibility in the education of the Africans by thrusting it onto the missions. The settlers were, after all, a self-interested group. Their representative on the Legislative Council controlled the budget,³ and they refused to vote grants-in-aid to missions which did not adhere strictly to the industrialization scheme in African education.⁴ The settlers increasingly became great opponents of any system that would elevate the Africans into a position where they would directly compete with him. For the moment, they were interested in a labour force, and so they insisted that such education must be tailored to this end. In 1924, Arthur told the East African Commission that the settlers were against any other form of education for the Africans than technical education of the lowest type.⁵ Arthur accused the government of shunning its responsibility, for he said the government "sought to hold the balance by camouflage than by direct attack on the industrialization scheme."⁶ In

³ Arthur to Oldham, September 2, 1930, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

⁴ Ibid. and Handley Hooper to Oldham, June 20, 1925, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

⁵ Arthur to Oldham, "Memorandum to the East African Commission," n.d., Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

⁶ Arthur to Oldham, September 2, 1930, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

1925, the settlers seemed to have won their cause on this issue. Handley Hooper anxiously reported that settler opinion was solid on industrial training and they had brought considerable pressure to divorce all government aid from mission aid.⁷

The same year, the Director of Education, Kenya, outlined his new policy on African education.⁸ It was more or less on the same lines that the settlers wanted. In 1924, Oldham had called for an enlightened policy on African education in Kenya. In particular, he called the government to be prepared to spend a lot of money on this education⁹ in order to make it worthwhile and not just a mere mockery. Oldham was, of course, aware of the power of the settlers, and so he warned

In regard to Kenya [African education] it is quite impossible to leave out of consideration the political aspect of the question. And this inevitably raises the whole issue whether the colony is going to be run primarily in the interests of the natives as laid down in the White Paper, or as the dominant element intend and have done in the past primarily for the benefit of the European community.¹⁰

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Hooper to Oldham, June 20, 1925, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

⁹ Minutes of Kenya Missionary Council, May 19-22, 1925, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

¹⁰ Oldham to Major Vischer, February 1, 1924, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C., Archives, London.

All the same, what emerged in 1925 was retrogressive rather than progressive, and served only to alienate the Africans whose impatience was already worn out. African education, the Director of Education told the Kenya Missionary Council, was to be adopted to their environment and to the needs of the life in the reserves.¹¹ With regards to higher education for Africans, there was to be hardly any, though the Director of Education did say that "the number of those proceeding to higher education was to be restricted to an absolute minimum."¹²

On the side of the missions, it became quite clear that their efforts and resources were not equal to the task before them.¹³ By 1925 when the principle of cooperation in African education was in its second year, the new Principal of the Jeanes School, J. W. C. Dougall, reported, after a tour of Mission Schools in Ki-kuyu, that the C. M. S. had not begun to take education seriously.¹⁴

¹¹Minutes of Kenya Missionary Council, May 19-22, 1925, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

¹²Director of Education to Senior Commissioner, Coast, October 17, 1925, enclosing Minutes and resolution of the Advisory Committee on Native Education, Coast 31/431, Nairobi Archives.

¹³Hooper to Oldham, June 20, 1925 and October 10, 1925, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

¹⁴J. W. C. Dougall to Oldham, November 17, 1925, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

The inability of the C.M.S. to meet the increasing demand for education was critical. The C.M.S. at home was faced with financial crisis, and was unable to find men to fill crucial positions in their mission stations in Kenya. Handley Hooper, C.M.S., pointed out that there was no evidence that the C.M.S. at home had given consideration to the maintenance of educational centers, in spite of the fact that the C.M.S. had been receiving grants-in-aid from the government for the past four years.¹⁵

Kahuhia, the only C.M.S. central institution, was under threat of closure due to lack of men and funds. Handley Hooper called for a definite policy and warned that the C.M.S. would look fools if they could not provide the staff to make use of the funds.¹⁶

The inability of the C.M.S. to provide replacements for the European staff was noted in the last chapter. Handley Hooper feared its repercussion on the C.M.S. African Christians, but also noted that the government would interpret it as negligence on the part of the C.M.S.¹⁷ He sounded a word of warning that

¹⁵Hooper to Oldham, June 20, 1925, Correspondence of J.H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

¹⁶Hooper to Oldham, June 10, 1925, Correspondence of J.H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

¹⁷Hooper to Oldham, June 30, 1925, Correspondence of J.H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

Africans would not remain content with this sort of situation. In December, 1924, he had also warned that their work at Kikuyu was seriously at stake, due to the indecision and the inability of the C.M.S. at Salisbury Square. In a memorandum to the Bishop of Mombasa, he pleaded with him to do the best he could to secure the assistance which the Home Committee "evidently contemplates giving to missionary education in this country, before its work has been hopelessly discredited by the defection of its pupils throughout a large area of its constituency."¹⁸ This defection, and, better still, rebellion, overtook the C.M.S. in 1929 before it had done anything to retrieve the situation. By mid-1925, the C.M.S. had neither decided on a definite policy nor had it made a positive step to send out staff for their schools. Hooper then pointed out that there was widespread feeling among the African Christians of the C.M.S. that the C.M.S. had thus far been unable, if not unwilling, to train enough Africans in the church. He warned that the time was soon approaching when they would refuse to provide money for the maintenance of European evangelists, and so break away from the C.M.S. He wrote:

¹⁸Hooper to Oldham, December 1, 1924, enclosing Memorandum to the Bishop of Mombasa, Correspondence of J.H. Oldham, I.M.C. Archives, London.

the failure to provide a successor for Mr. Good at Mombasa and for Mr. Harris at Kaloleni is already interpreted as gross negligence of a responsibility which has never been disavowed. The closing of Kahuhia will finally discredit the reputation of the C.M.S. for cooperative undertaking. In addition to other commitments the C.M.S. unaided is too poor to undertake the maintenance of training for Native leaders who are necessary to bear the proper responsibility in their own Church. We can continue with the expensive policy of maintaining European evangelists but the natives themselves will not agree to that indefinitely, nor will they be willing to assume financial responsibility on such terms.¹⁹

The following year the C.S.M. was also faced with the same problem. Horace Philp, C.S.M., deplored the inability of the mission to cope with the demand for education, even with substantial government grants.²⁰ Already the mission had suspended work from two centers and was contemplating, also, withdrawing from two outstations. "Our financial position," wrote Philp, "is our biggest embarrassment and on this ground we are having to face the problem of a certain amount of curtailment of our activities in the immediate future."²¹ This is a partial explanation why the missions cut down their services but it is by no means the main reason. Already, the government was demanding higher standards of educa-

¹⁹Hooper to G. T. Manley, June 30, 1925, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

²⁰Kikuyu News, June 25, 1927, p. 16. ²¹Ibid.

tion from the missions, as a condition for government grants. To meet this, the missions had to withdraw from some of the outstations to concentrate on the central stations where there were the central schools. However, the missions took this step at a crucial time when they should either have been stepping up their services or perhaps handing them over to the reluctant government.

Even the curriculum of which the Protestant missions approved, and one that they were going to embark on seriously, was not one that was going to provide the Africans with the kind of education they were demanding. Their emphasis was on the development of character. They insisted that the government should place at the forefront of its educational objectives for "animistic Africans the development of character through instruction in Christian religion."²² The Kenya Missionary Alliance endorsed the educational plans put forward, that year, whose main basis was manual training. Late in 1923, the Representative Council, which changed its name to the Kenya Missionary Council the following year, had agreed to embark on elementary agriculture and technical elementary education, and so called for government finan-

²² Minutes of Kenya Missionary Council, February 17-20, 1925, Correspondence of J.H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

cial help since the Representative Council maintained, "all are agreed that the education of the African must be based on manual work."²³ Technical education would in itself have been useful if it had not been all that the Africans were going to get. Such education was not intended to be proper technical education but one aimed at turning out unskilled African artisans.

It cannot too well be emphasized that the Kikuyu wanted precisely the opposite; they wanted higher education to build a Kikuyu nation.²⁴ In the same year, some African parents requested government help to send their sons overseas for higher education.²⁵ Four years later, Jomo Kenyatta, Secretary of Kikuyu Central Association, was asking for higher education for a Kikuyu nation.²⁶ The Advisory Committee on Native Education in Kenya,

²³Minutes of the Representative Council of the Protestant Alliance, Kenya, November 19-22, 1923, Correspondence of J.H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

²⁴Jomo Kenyatta to Editor, Muingwithania, April, 1929, translated into English by the C.I.D. AC/MKS I B/13/1 Kenya National Archives, Nairobi. (Cited hereafter as Nairobi Archives.)

²⁵Director of Education to the Senior Commissioner, October 17, 1925, enclosing Minutes and Resolutions of the Advisory Committee on Native Education, Kenya, Coast 31/431, Nairobi Archives.

²⁶Jomo Kenyatta to Editor, Muingwithania, April, 1929, AC/MKS 1 B/13/1, Nairobi Archives.

on which sat missionaries, settlers and government officials but with a preponderant number of missionaries,²⁷ turned down this request in combination with the settlers on the Committee.²⁸ They were to provide for it only as long as such education aimed at building up character, and as long as it was directed towards vocational training.²⁹ For the time being, no consideration was given to the request of the parents. So much emphasis on character training would seem to suggest that the African character was so bad that it required all the missionaries' life time to make it good. No mention was ever made of the character of the Europeans in Kenya, which needed more treatment than that of the African.

By 1925, the tide was moving too fast for either the missionaries or the settlers. That year were formed local Native Councils in Kenya.³⁰ Membership to these Councils was by election but the

²⁷Oldham to Mrs. McGregor Ross, October 27, 1924, citing members of the Committee, Correspondence of J.H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

²⁸Director of Education to the Senior Commissioner, October 17, 1925 enclosing Minutes and Resolutions of the Advisory Committee on Native Education, Kenya, Coast 31/431, Nairobi Archives.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Vincent Harlow, E. M. Chilver and Alison Smith, History of East Africa, Vol. II (Oxford, 1965), p. 350.

chairmen of these councils were to be the District Commissioners acting as ex-officio members.³¹ The councils discussed matters directly concerning local affairs; they had no legislative power and this proved to be a very serious limitation. However, in some areas, they were given a free hand. They were given authority to levy local rates, to collect land fees and to raise a special levy for education.³² All these they used, jealously and judiciously.

In their power to levy special rates for education, over and above that which was derived from direct taxation to the central government, lay the solution to their educational problem and a way out of the mission control of their education. Few then realized that they would use this power to collect money for secular schools which were to be out of the hands of the missions, and few even thought that their hopes would be realized four years hence. The frustration of the Africans with the mission education, and the mission control of this education, was the main reason why they seized the opportunity offered them in the Native Councils to levy money for their own education. In 1927, all the Councils in Kikuyu and Kavirondo

³¹Ibid., p. 351.

³²Ibid.

voted money for education.³³ What became serious was that the Councils stated that this money was for none other than government schools, and so they refused to make it over to the mission schools. This was two years before the female circumcision issue broke out. The Kikuyu Province Annual Report for 1929 reported that "the Kikuyu demand for secular education and state as opposed to mission controlled schools existed long before the circumcision question became acute."³⁴ With regard to the educational levy and its purpose, the District Commissioner reported:

Ever since the Native Councils first voted money for education from their voluntary imposed rates, some three years ago they have asked for Government Schools and have declined to make over those sums for the enlargement and improvement of missions.³⁵

In 1929, the Native Councils had in their local treasuries £50,000 ready cash for education.³⁶ The Director of Education said that this money was for the establishment of schools--"definitely for non-missionary schools."³⁷ Between 1927 and 1929, the Native

³³ Provincial Annual Reports, Kikuyu Province, 1929, PC/Cp. 15/2/1, Nairobi Archives.

³⁴ Ibid. ³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ John Scott to Oldham, March 10, 1929, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

³⁷ Ibid.

Councils of Fort Hall, Kiambu and Nyeri had collected 20,000 for this purpose.³⁸ District Commissioners all over Kikuyu had tried to use their official positions as Chairmen of the Councils to persuade the Councils to make over this money to the missions, but had failed. It is no wonder that they began to be concerned. This feeling was well expressed by the District Commissioner of Fort Hall. He stated:

The Native Council has on deposit a sum of four thousand, seven hundred and fifty pounds for the erection of an undenominational Government School for the natives of the Reserve; this money has been on deposit for a considerable time, and both Councillors and natives are extremely disappointed that no start has been made with the building.³⁹

Even the Director of Education tried to use his official capacity to force the Councils to grant this money to the missions but in vain. The Native Councils well knew that the policy of the government was that the government would only open government schools in the areas where no mission schools existed. But the Councillors were already in rebellion. In a letter to Oldham, the Director of Education reported that the Councils were bent on having none but government schools or else their own schools. He wrote:

³⁸Provincial Annual Reports, Kikuyu Provinces, 1930, PC/CP. 15/2/1, . . . Nairobi Archives.

³⁹Ibid.

First I discussed the matter with the Chief Native Commissioner and decided to go myself to the Local Native Councils. I wanted to know why they were asking for Government Schools when missionaries had been working so long among them. Then I asked the missionaries to address them. In the Kavirondo they want Government Schools. They have voted for Government Schools; in one case they said, tax was the money of all irrespective of religion and ought to be spent on all. In Kiambu, Arthur put the missionary case but he was completely turned down. The same consensus of opinion at Fort Hall.⁴⁰

This put the government in a very difficult position. For one thing, this money was available at Kikuyu and Kavirondo which were areas where the missions were most active and most firmly established. Then the government could not argue that this was an uncalled for reaction against the missions by predominately pagan Councils. This was the view Arthur took but one that was wrong for, by 1929, three quarters of the Councillors in Kavirondo and Kikuyu were Christians.⁴¹ Arthur also found it extremely difficult to believe that the Councils' vote for government schools, or their own schools, which placed them definitely against mission schools was the general wish of all the natives of Kikuyu and Kavirondo. He consequently dismissed

⁴⁰Scott to Oldham, March 10, 1929, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

⁴¹Scott to Oldham, June 7, 1929, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

the Councils as unrepresentative of natives as a whole.⁴² This is ridiculous since it came from a European who was claiming to represent native interests in the Legislative Councils. Arthur's view was also the view the Colonial Government held about African political associations but increasingly became more a convenient means of refusing to recognize them than the actual fact. Councillors to the Native Councils were elected through popular vote, and they discussed the very limited matters they were allowed to with the interests of the whole community at heart. There is little doubt that their refusal to hand over the money to mission schools, in preference to secular schools to which both non-Christian and Christian parents could send their children, is a spectacular example of what representing the general wish of the natives meant. This should have served as an example to the missionaries, who were only partially representing native interests, while they wererepresenting missionary interests. Arthur would have above all wanted the Native Councils to rubber-stamp the wish of the administration, and of Europeans, in much the same way as some of his obedient African Christians did under threat from him, even on matters such as the way they should spend money they had of their own free will raised for education, over

⁴²Scott to Oldham, January 5, 1929, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

and above the ordinary taxation they paid to the central government. It is no wonder that he blamed the District Councils for not directing the Councils properly, by which he meant dictating to them what they should have done. It was soon clear that the government, even though under pressure from the missionaries, the C.S.M. and the C.M.S., in particular, could no longer continue to adhere to the principle agreed upon earlier that they would open schools only where there were no mission schools or places which could adequately be served by the missions. Even at Edinburgh House, Oldham believed that the pressure for native schools free from the hands of the missions was so great that it could not be contained; they wanted their own schools, from bush schools right to the top of the ladder.⁴³

By 1929, the opposition of the Kikuyu to the onslaught of the missions on the Kikuyu customs and traditions came to a head over the circumcision controversy. The Kikuyu Central Association, formed in 1925,⁴⁴ was at the vanguard of this movement. Arthur rightly said it stood for female circumci-

⁴³Oldham to Hooper, March 11, 1930, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

⁴⁴Harlow, Chilver and Smith, History of East Africa, p. 358.

sion and many Kikuyu customs.⁴⁵ However, he was wrong to equate K.C.A.'s stand for Kikuyu customs with anti-progressiveness and anti-order.⁴⁶ But he believed it was so, because Kikuyuism clashed with the interests of the missions and what they stood for.

Almost all the Protestant missionaries to Kenya, we have remarked, abhorred native customs and traditions. They saw nothing good in African dances, music or in such important African traditions as circumcision and initiation ceremonies. They lumped them together as heathen and immoral without trying to understand them, what they were for and what significance they had in the life of the people to whom they had come to teach Christianity. No African, according to them, could become Christian before giving up his old, treasured customs. Arthur, for example, persuaded the government to ban the songs sung by the Kikuyu during the Harry Thuku movement in 1922 not so much because they were political and anti-European but because "they were morally bad and the words and bodily action incites

⁴⁵Arthur to McLachlan, March 9, 1929, in J. W. Arthur Papers, University of Edinburgh Library Archives, Edinburgh. (Cited hereafter as Arthur Papers, University of Edinburgh Archives.)

⁴⁶Ibid.

to passion and results invariably in umbani (fornication)."⁴⁷

Kikuyu nationalism began with the formation of Kikuyu political associations in the early twenties. This meant, above all, that the Kikuyu became conscious of themselves as Kikuyu, and of their customs and traditions. It was not before the Kikuyu Central Association was formed that the Kikuyu began to campaign openly for the preservation of Kikuyu customs and traditions. We must mention, at once, that this was not an inward-looking nationalism, tribal though it was. At least, it was not any more so than that of the settlers of Kenya. For one thing, the Kikuyu were not rejecting all that was Western. On the contrary, they were going in for Western education of the best kind but also specially for the Kikuyu, as a nation.

The development of Kikuyuism clashed with the interests of the missionaries in most vital areas. This clash in education has already been discussed. But the clash that was the immediate cause for rebellion in church occurred over female circumcision, a vital part of Kikuyu customs and traditions which the missions were trying to get rid of. Surprisingly, the C.M.S. in 1927 seem to have seen the light with regard to native dances. That year, the

⁴⁷ Arthur to Chief Native Commissioner, November 17, 1922, Arthur Papers, University of Edinburgh Archives.

Executive Committee decided to adopt a more positive and compromising attitude towards them. The C.M.S. became more compromising in order to avoid confrontation with the K.C.A. which was fighting the missions that were opposed to what the Association stood for. The Executive Committee of the C.M.S., therefore, urged the encouragement of native dances where they were helpful and innocent.⁴⁸ However, the Executive Committee recommended great caution before permission was given for the dances to be continued in their Christian community "in view of the most undesirable tendencies of most African dances."⁴⁹

Perhaps there was nothing in Kikuyu that held so central a place in the social life of the tribe, or which made them so distinctly Kikuyu, as circumcision and initiation ceremony. Initially all girls and boys in Kikuyu were circumcised at puberty to graduate into manhood and womanhood. For the Kikuyu it marked the end of one life and the beginning of another. After circumcision, the adult was henceforth accepted into the society as a grown-up man or woman, ready and able to discharge responsibility re-

⁴⁸Minutes of the Executive Committee, C.M.S. Kenya, November 9-15, 1927, in file marked "Diocese of Mombasa-- Cumulative Minutes," Archives of the Archbishop of East Africa, C.M.S. Nairobi. (Cited hereafter as Bishop's Archives, C.M.S., Nairobi.)

⁴⁹Ibid.

quired of all Kikuyu women and men.

With girls, where the controversy with the missions occurred, circumcision consisted of the excision of the clitoris with small cuts on the labia majora. The operation was done by old women who were specialists at it, and they administered tribal medicine to prevent over-bleeding and infection. The operation was also supposed to be a test in perseverance, and physical pain which the girls had to endure was, therefore, expected. The actual operation was not as important as the rites prior to and after it. However, since the rites could not be performed without the operation, it was central to the whole process.

Missionaries made much out of nguiko which the Kikuyu society allowed between the sexes after circumcision. Both men and women were allowed to sleep together and the two sexes were allowed to attain sexual satisfaction, before marriage, through external physical contact only. In Kikuyu society, as in Chagga society, pregnancy before marriage was punished through ostracism or often by death. Besides, physical virginity was required of every girl upon marriage and lack of it was a serious disgrace and shame to both the girl and her family. Physical virginity carried, therefore, so much prestige for the girl's family that there was hardly any marriage where a girl was proved otherwise.

Judging by the fact that there were no spinsters in Kikuyu traditional society, it is not wrong to believe that there was hardly any sexual intercourse between the sexes before marriage. The absence of an equivalent word for spinster in Kikuyu language further suggests the absence of spinsterhood in Kikuyu society, as indeed in many Bantu societies. The Protestant missions mistook nguiko for sexual intercourse and hastily condemned it, without bothering to find out what it was all about. Equally, the missionaries exaggerated the effects of female circumcision on childbearing. A majority of Kikuyu women neither had difficulty in childbearing nor did they experience unusual physical injury resulting from the operation. Only a few unlucky cases did experience any difficulty. This is evidently shown by a sample study carried out by Nancy Wambui at Karia, Kiambu District last year. Miss Wambui, a graduate from Leipzig University and a native of Karia, Kiambu District, had this to report from a study of twelve women, all circumcised. They were all between fifty and sixty-five years of age.⁵⁰ "All of them have children," she writes, "the youngest has six and the oldest has nine. All the children but two are alive and very

⁵⁰Communication from Nancy Wambui, August 17, 1966.

strong."⁵¹ In the same communication she continued,

Our conversation was conducted as between women to women and so they were able to tell me frankly the problems of childbearing. Out of the twelve women only two said they had difficulty during childbirth. One lost one child and almost died and another only suffered severe pains. Of the second child out of twelve who died, the death took place at the age of seven as a result of an unknown disease.⁵²

The C.S.M. was opposed to female circumcision from the very beginning of their work on the highlands. In 1909, the C.S.M. came out in the open against initiation ceremonies and ruled that boys could be circumcised but without the rites connected with it.⁵³ In 1915, the C.S.M. missionaries had brought enough pressure to bear on their staff at Kikuyu to agree, against their wish, that all Christians should not practice circumcision.⁵⁴ In the following year, again under pressure from Arthur and his staff, the African Church Committee recommended "total prohibition."⁵⁵ That year the C.S.M. made non-circumcision for girls a necessary condition for church membership and further ruled that those who

⁵¹Ibid. ⁵²Ibid.

⁵³F. B. Welbourn, East African Rebels, A Study of Some Independent Churches (London, 1961), p. 136.

⁵⁴Ibid. ⁵⁵Ibid.

condoned it were liable to excommunication. By the first year of the second decade, the Church of Scotland Mission had ruled against circumcision in all its Christians, and the Gospel Missionary Society and the American Inland Mission had also joined them.⁵⁶ Arthur campaigned to get the government to legislate against it, and persuaded the Roman Catholics to join a deputation of the Kenya Missionary Alliance to see the governor, on July 5, 1926, on the subject of the suppression of indecent customs.⁵⁷ However, the view of the government, which was also the view of the C.M.S., was that circumcision held such a central place in the life of the Kikuyu, and it was of so ancient an origin, that it could not be abolished by legislation but through education.⁵⁸ In a confidential Circular from the Native Affairs Department, the Acting Chief Native Commissioner, C. F. Watkins, admitted in 1925 that, in its more restricted form, female circumcision did no harm.⁵⁹ He stated that legislation to prevent it would be

⁵⁶Ibid., pp. 131-137.

⁵⁷Minutes of the Kenya Missionary Council, August 17, 1926, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

⁵⁸Native Affairs Department Circular No. 36, "Female Circumcision," September 21, 1925 (Confidential), KBU/32 Nairobi Archives.

⁵⁹Ibid.

difficult to enforce and that premature action would only unite the natives against the government, in defence of their old customs.⁶⁰ Watkins preferred to bring it to an end through education when Kikuyu public opinion would be well-educated enough to stop female circumcision of its own free will.

The C. M. S. did not adopt a uniform policy towards circumcision.⁶¹ At Kahuhia, Handley Hooper conducted regular lessons against circumcision; at Kabete, the C. M. S. steered the same course as the C. S. M., and in the rest of the stations the missionaries did nothing.⁶² In 1927, the Highland Missionary Committee of the C. M. S. had resolved to support every effort put forward to discourage female circumcision.⁶³ The Committee did this after the District Council of the African Church Council had requested that "means be found for the training apart of those girls who wish not to be circumcised."⁶⁴ But the bishop outlined the policy

⁶⁰ Church of Scotland "Memorandum on Circumcision," December 1, 1931 (unpublished manuscript), p. 9, Arthur Papers, University of Edinburgh Archives.

⁶¹ Ibid., pp. 13-15. ⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Minutes of the Highlands Missionary Committee, C. M. S., October 25-26, 1927, Bishop's Archives, Nairobi.

⁶⁴ Minutes of the Highlands Missionary Committee, C. M. S., January 6, 1927, Bishop's Archives, Nairobi.

of the C.M.S. on the issue only in 1931. In his pastoral letter, the bishop set out the conditions on which the C.M.S. would tolerate female circumcision until such time as the African Christians of the C.M.S. became educated enough to secure its abolition. The bishop laid down three conditions:

1. All heathen practices connected with the custom must be entirely abandoned by Christians.
2. Anything of a public nature must be strictly prohibited.
3. Any operation causing physical injury to the individual must be forbidden.⁶⁵

The Methodist Church refused to accept that an African could not be a member of Christ "according to his lights, and cannot be a member of His Church, while continuing to practice or condone a custom based upon long tribal tradition."⁶⁶ R. T. Worthington, writing on behalf of the M.M.S., further seriously questioned the right of Europeans to lay down the condition on which an African may be regarded as a member of the Church of Christ. He wrote:

⁶⁵ Bishop Heywood to all Clergy and Members of the Pastorate Committee in the Diocese, October 12, 1931 in file marked "Circumcision," Bishop's Archives, C.M.S., Nairobi.

⁶⁶ Notes on the attitude of the Methodist Missionary Society in connection with the "Circumcision of Girls," by R. T. Worthington, n.d., in file marked "Circumcision," Bishop's Archives, C.M.S., Nairobi.

The function of the Church is not to impose upon any community a set of regulations but to introduce men and women of every race to the perfect life, helping them as it may mean for them, but realizing that only from within can come growth in Christlikeness, and recognition that no set pattern of Christlikeness can be imposed on Africans and Europeans alike.⁶⁷

The Roman Catholic Church was not involved in the controversy, but they did not interfere with the circumcision of boys and girls on the grounds that it was a social event and gave the young Kikuyu a standing in the tribe.⁶⁸ Their primary concern was not with the "fact but with the methods and circumstances," to which they had directed their energies in an attempt to improve them.⁶⁹ Of the three British Protestant missions, only the C.S.M. adopted a legalistic and punitive policy towards Kikuyu customs, especially female circumcision.

There is little doubt, now, that the reports of the missions stating that the African church leaders agreed that laws should be passed against female circumcision, is not correct. The same applied to the reports that the Native Councils, under pressure from the District Commissioners, did so. None of them took it seriously, and they did not enforce the rules they had passed. It was not uncommon for the missionaries to use force to get their adherents to do what they wanted them to do. African opposition

⁶⁷Welbourn, pp. 137-138.

⁶⁸Ibid.

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 138.

to the rule that Christian girls should not be circumcised was sporadic before the second half of the decade. Matters came to a head in 1928 when at a political rally held at Nyeri that year, the Kikuyu Central Association declared that they stood for Kikuyu tribal customs and stated clearly that they wanted female circumcision.⁷⁰ The African Church leaders at Tumu-tumu who were members of the Kikuyu Central Association declared that they would repudiate the law of the C.S.M. forbidding circumcision. Opposition to the church law at Tumu-tumu began in 1926, when the church was attacked and their school was upset.⁷¹ When the C.S.M. required a declaration of loyalty from the church members, the Church met with a rebellion and lost over 200 members.

Events became more dramatic as the C.S.M. and the Kikuyu Central Association prepared for Armageddon. The following year, a conference of the representatives of the missions passed resolutions against female circumcision. The K.C.A. used the resolutions in their political platform to make known the intension

⁷⁰Ibid.

⁷¹Arthur to Oldham, September 2, 1930, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

of the missions to erode Kikuyu customs. Legal suits taken at Kiambu, where two women were fined thirty shillings for performing a severe operation, only enhanced the popularity of the Kikuyu Central Association.⁷²

The C.S.M. took the lead in requiring the African leaders of the church to sign an oath which was necessary if they wanted to continue to be members of the church.⁷³ A. Irvine, from Chogoria C.S.M. mission, said that he and Arthur felt that it was right to demand from their church members absolute separation from political activity which was so definitely anti-Church and anti-Christian.⁷⁴ J. W. Arthur pressed the Kirk Session to agree that African Church leaders of the C.S.M. should swear an oath "requiring them to reaffirm their vow against this rite, and to dissociate themselves from the particular political party [Kikuyu Central Association] which was responsible for the agitation."⁷⁵ The presbytery approved the wish of the Kirk Session,

⁷²Dagoretti Political Record Book Vol. IV, p. 55. KBU/8Q, Nairobi Archives.

⁷³Kikuyu News, June 20, 1930, pp. 4-5.

⁷⁴A. Irvine to Editor, Kikuyu News, September 28, 1929.

⁷⁵Kikuyu News, June 20, 1930, p. 5.

though by no means unanimously; Arthur reported that there was a dissenting minority in the presbytery.⁷⁶ The oath demanded:

I promised to have done with everything connected with circumcision of women because it is not in agreement with the things of God, and to have done with the Kikuyu Central Association because it aims at destroying the Church of God.⁷⁷

At Chogoria, the C.S.M. faced great opposition to the oath, and only fourteen members signed the oath along with two children.⁷⁸

Arthur reported that only a few of the very staunchest remained true to the Church of Christ.⁷⁹

Attendance at the C.S.M. Central School fell by half, while, out of a regular attendance of 1,529 in four out-schools, there were only 48 pupils.⁸⁰ The effect it had on their teachers was even more startling; in November, 1929, Dougall reported that some twenty to thirty out-school teachers had left, and that only three were left in the Central Station.⁸¹ Stevenson Githii, an African Christian of C.S.M. had this to say about the results:

⁷⁶Ibid. ⁷⁷A. Irvine to Editor, Kikuyu News, September 28, 1929.

⁷⁸Ibid. ⁷⁹Ibid.

⁸⁰Arthur to Dutchess of Atholl, January 17, 1930, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, C.M.S., London.

⁸¹Dougall to Oldham, November 10, 1929, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

we do not get many worshippers in our services. . . . We also get very few people in the Central School, Kikuyu and get none in our out-stations. In the evening of Christmas Day, Dr. Arthur, Barlow, Gilbert, Andrea, Samuel, Gitau. . . and myself had to walk in darkness to see and arrest the turned back Mission boys who were dancing a bad new dance in the Mission after the Government had prohibited dancing that bad dance in the Mission land and Reserves.⁸²

Before the end of 1929, the Kikuyu had boycotted all the out-schools of the C.S.M., A.T.M. and G.M.S. The prestige of these missions suffered considerably, while the influence and activities of the K.C.A. increased greatly as a result of this conflict. For example, the K.C.A. political hostility against the C.S.M. station Chogoria, in Embu district, received unprecedented support from the masses in the last four months of 1929.⁸³ The K.C.A. was so successful in mustering all the forces against the C.S.M. on this issue that the District Commissioner reported that nothing else could have raised the prestige of the Association so high as did this action of the Mission.⁸⁴ The C.M.S. at Fort Hall and Embu, however, was comparatively little affected and the United Methodist Mission was not affected

⁸²"An African View of the Crisis," in Kikuyu News, December 29, 1930, p. 3.

⁸³Kikuyu Province Annual Report, 1929, CP/PC. 15/2/1, Nairobi Archives.

⁸⁴Ibid.

at all.⁸⁵

The political ferment was now openly violent and indiscriminately anti-missionary, in all sorts of ways. To be sure, remote mission out-stations had suffered scattered attacks, schools and church services had been interrupted and stopped, and coffee seedlings pulled out of the mission gardens since 1926.⁸⁶ Tumutumu C.S.M. station is a spectacular example. Through 1929 this became more open and widespread across Kikuyu. In essence, violence became now a popular way through which the Kikuyu, and here Kikuyu becomes synonymous with the Kikuyu Central Association, expressed their hostility against the missions. At Gacharage, Kiambu district, an armed group of thirty young Kikuyu ordered the schoolmaster to stop teaching and began to pull down the thatched roof of the school building.⁸⁷ They would have completely destroyed the whole building had not the Reverend Mr. Bewes arrived in time to save it from destruction and the teacher from being beaten.⁸⁸ At Ngeca, also Kiambu district, Welbourn has reported the same thing; the evangelist was ordered to stop conducting church services, school

⁸⁵Ibid.

⁸⁶District Commissioner, Kiambu to Provincial Commissioner, Nyeri, December 19, 1929, PC/DC Adm. 15/3/3, Nairobi Archives.

⁸⁷Ibid. ⁸⁸Ibid.

apparatus and furniture was removed and gardens destroyed.⁸⁹

Towards the last two years of the decade, the Kikuyu had begun to launch claims to the land on which the missions had built, but lost the claims. In 1929, the District Commissioner, Kiambu, reported that the natives were claiming the estate, which then belonged to the White Sisters, Kiambu, and the land of the Scotch Mission, Kikuyu, and of the Africa Inland Mission, at Kijabe.⁹⁰

Their resolve to ^{use} force to recover the land they had given the missions freely is understandable, the more so since the Africans had, in addition to giving the land, built the schools and the church buildings with their own labour and money, a process which was, therefore, no mean investment. These were, after all, the schools which had made the government refuse to open government schools for the Kikuyu and the control the Kikuyu wanted to wrest from the missions since 1927. In a real sense everything in the missions belonged to the Africans; and it is not surprising that after failing to get them back legally, the Africans resorted to force to do so as this was certainly the only means left to them. The climax was

⁸⁹ Welbourn, p. 141.

⁹⁰ District Commissioner, Kiambu to Provincial Commissioner, Nyeri, December 24, 1929, PC/DC Adm. 15/3/3.

reached on January 2, 1930, with the murder of Hilda Stumpf of Kijabe, A. I. M. station.⁹¹ Such attacks were not only levelled against the white missionaries and only a few did suffer personal attack. In the out-schools where this violence became common the African catechists and schoolmasters were in control. These were subject to direct personal attack and abuse for they were seen as stooges and collaborators with the missionaries. Their refusal to take a stand with the majority of the Christians who had stood for Kikuyu customs and traditions, and had therefore repudiated the church law against female circumcision, placed them in the same position as those who refused to support the Mau Mau twenty years later. Fortunately, they were not murdered in cold blood as their counterparts came to be but they suffered equal abuse and direct personal attack. It was not yet the day of the panga, the sime or the gun; their day lay in the late forties and early fifties.

By 1930, the break with the missions was already under way. In Kiambu, Fort Hall and Embu, numerous requests were made to the government officials for permission to hold independent religious meetings. New sects had already appeared by the beginning of the year. In Kiambu, for example, five independent churches

⁹¹Ibid.

were established.⁹² According to the Provincial Report for 1930, they were well attended and were conducted on more or less normal lines.⁹³ Arthur sadly reported that those who had left his church had begun to hold opposition services; not in the spirit of Christ, he mistakenly said, but in a spirit of rebellion.⁹⁴ This was contrary to the more accurate and sober reports of the District Commissioners of the various districts. The Kikuyu had now come into their own, and were ready to begin and lead their own churches. These churches were to be independent, independence that they had been trying to get since 1922. But the nationalists could not conceive of churches without schools. After all, the movement towards government and secular schools had been most marked and most articulate since Thuku's time. One might even suggest that the question of education was more fundamental. It would probably be right to suggest that the church would give the schools their reality; it would conform to Kikuyu society. In the educational field, there had been a deadlock since 1927. There was no government school in Kikuyu country primarily be-

⁹² Kikuyu Province, Annual Report, 1930, PC/CP 15/2/1, Nairobi Archives.

⁹³ Ibid. ⁹⁴ Kikuyu News, June 20, 1930, p. 5.

cause the policy of the government was to open schools only where there were no mission schools. The deadlock occurred because the Native Councils were unwilling to hand over to the missions the considerable sums they had voted for education, and the government strictly adhered to the policy of "establishing schools only on the ground of the absence or inadequacy of missionary effort."⁹⁵ J. Scott put the blame for this anti-missionary attitude in the Councils directly on Arthur, adding:

"he has gone out on the rails and has apparently captivated Downing of the A. I. M."⁹⁶ He further accused Arthur of chastising his teachers which he said was practically persecution.⁹⁷

Scott was backed by a good number of missionaries. Handley Hooper, who was now Africa Secretary at Salisbury Square, took a more sympathetic view of the situation.⁹⁸ He felt that the natives had come to realize that in the last analysis they could not force the missions to give them the education they

⁹⁵ Kikuyu Province, Annual Report, 1930, PC/CP 15/2/1, Nairobi Archives.

⁹⁶ Scott to Oldham, December 14, 1929, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Hooper to Oldham, April 11, 1929, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

wanted since they felt the responsibility lay directly with the giver. On the other hand, government services in education, as in all other services, were rendered in respect of revenue directly collected from them. It was therefore necessary that they should control it; and this was the reason why they should so persistently wish to have a direct say in the control of their destiny which education would help shape. Hooper, however, lamented the wide gap between the natives and the missions as the demand for Africans to control their own education reflected nothing else but, he believed, a woeful lack of confidence between the missions and the natives.⁹⁹ Of Arthur, he wrote:

Except for a small group around Kikuyu, the majority of natives have no confidence in him [Arthur]. He is essentially the old Tory of the ruling caste and does not get down amongst them enough to make them feel he is one of them. Some of his staff at Kikuyu call him Lord Arthur. There is a trace of truth in it, for he is essentially a clean sports loving Sahib.¹⁰⁰

Towards the end of 1929 African parents petitioned the Director of Education to open schools for their children. In January, 1930, Zakaria Wambura, Barnaba Regeru and Zefania Wainaina saw the Director as representatives of the parents who wanted the government to open schools between Dagoretti and Kikuyu, where the

⁹⁹Ibid.

¹⁰⁰Ibid.

C.S.M. had had schools.¹⁰¹ The Director of Education had done his best to keep up the already sinking reputation of the church, by refusing to open government schools in Kikuyu. However, while he was pleading for the church to come to peaceful terms with their adherents, the Africans were already establishing independent native schools, much against his wish. In 1930, all the District Commissioners in Kikuyu had become doubtful as to the wisdom and the advantages of giving a monopoly of all African education to the missions.¹⁰² They were all agreed that it would be impossible to maintain the system which was primarily for the Africans who were bitterly opposed to this monopoly. There was no other course open to the government except to co-operate fully with the Native Councils in order to maintain control and supervision over the new schools. The Provincial Commissioner, in his Annual Report, Kikuyu Province, emphasized the importance and the urgency of the question of education. He pointed out that it was necessary for the government to be positive towards the demands of the Kikuyu for educations, lest the government lose the confidence of the natives and hence the control of

¹⁰¹Scott to Oldham, January 9, 1930, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

¹⁰²Kikuyu Province, Annual Report, 1930, PC/CP 15/2/1, Nairobi Archives.

African education.¹⁰³ He called for the government to take the opportunity offered in the movement, and establish control over the educational organization before the movement gathered too high a speed to be controlled effectively.¹⁰⁴ It was already too late. At the same time that the Africans were establishing independent churches, they also established independent native schools. In 1929, there were formed two associations, the Kikuyu Independent Schools Association which established the African Independent Pentecostal Church, and the Kikuyu Karing'a Educational Association, which became connected with the African Orthodox Church.¹⁰⁵ In 1930, was begun at Githunguri the Kenya Teachers' College which was to be a place of higher learning.¹⁰⁶

The development of the independent schools and churches after 1930 lies outside the scope of this study. The movement for this independency was hard and long-projected, having begun in 1922. It is pertinent to mention that from 1930 there existed side by side, mission schools and independent schools as well as Western churches and independent churches. K.I.S.A. became the

¹⁰³Ibid. ¹⁰⁴Ibid.

¹⁰⁵Welbourn, p. 145.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., p. 153.

less nationalistic, pro-colonial government and pro-Christianity, while the Karang'a Educational Association became militantly nationalistic, anti-government and anti-missions; in essence, it carried on the nationalist movement.

While it is possible to pinpoint what led to the African church movement among the Yoruba in West Africa, for example, the events in Kikuyu that led to the establishment of independent churches and schools are much more difficult to disentangle. In the Yoruba country, it was essentially a rebellion against the re-imposition of white control and white domination in the church.¹⁰⁷ White control in church and state meant also the imposition of western culture in place of African culture. The Lambeth Conference of 1888 had set the pattern for the hardening of attitude towards African customs and traditions.¹⁰⁸ In particular, the Conference had voted against polygamy which was, in essence, a pronouncement against the social system in Black Africa.¹⁰⁹ Already the movement for white supremacy on the Niger Pastorate, and the purge of its African bishop and clergy, was in full swing.

¹⁰⁷James Bertin Webster, The African Churches Among the Yoruba, 1888-1922 (Oxford, 1964), pp. 42-47, pp. 90-91.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., p. 43. ¹⁰⁹Ibid.

In 1891, the Niger pastorate was purged of its bishop, Samuel A. Crowther;¹¹⁰ African leadership in the church across Black Africa was discredited and European leadership imposed. It was essentially this white supremacy and leadership in the church that the African Christians revolted against; they set up the African Church which would adjust itself to the needs of the African society and culture.

Nearer home, in Buganda, the break-away churches can be easily explained in terms of the two African personalities who broke away from the C. M. S. and founded their own churches.

Joswa Kate Mugema founded the Ekibina Kya Katonda Omu Ayinza Byona (the Society of the One Almighty God) K. O. A. B.;¹¹¹ the

followers of the chief agents, Malaki Masajjakawa, became known as Malakites and in Buganda Bamalaki,¹¹² whose roots were a total rejection of medicine and doctors, in 1914.¹¹³ This was a rebellion against the "political-ecclesiastical order and alliance that came into being in the 1900 agreement."¹¹⁴ The agreement was in favour of the administrative chiefs and against clan heads who had hitherto been most powerful, and to which he

¹¹⁰Ibid., p. 40. ¹¹¹Welbourn, p. 34. ¹¹²Ibid., p. 35.

¹¹³Ibid., pp. 33-53, passim. ¹¹⁴Ibid., pp. 18-29, passim.

himself belonged. The agreement resulted not only in loss of power but in the loss of land upon which this power was built. In essence, Mugema began K.O.A.B. to re-establish his own power which he had prior to 1900 as head of the Monkey Clan, Prime Minister of the Dead, and ritual parent of the Kabaka, with the responsibility of installing the Kabakas.¹¹⁵ Spartas founded the African Orthodox Church in 1931 as a revolt against what Welbourn calls the paternalism of the C.M.S.¹¹⁶ Reuben Spartas, however, was far ahead of his times in Buganda for he wanted an African Church for the Africans. The Constitution made it specific that it was to be led by the Africans:

The African Church shall be controlled by the Africans under the supervision and guidance of the Holy Ghost through the spiritual, physical and fraternal help and protection of the Holy Patriarchal Sea [sic] of Alexandria, Egypt. It shall be an absolutely independent church in all her internal administration.¹¹⁷

There was no doubt that it was his ambition to be an independent leader that made him start his own church. The Buganda political hierarchy, or that of the C.M.S., had no place for him.

The situation in Kenya and in Kikuyu especially was more complex. There are no clear-cut powerful individuals whose traditional and political power in the tribe, prior to the coming of the alien rule, can be easily identified as, for example, Mugema.

¹¹⁵Ibid., p. 24-25.

¹¹⁶Ibid., p. 77, p. 81.

¹¹⁷Ibid., p. 83.

There were individuals like Thuku, Daudi Maina wa Kiragu, Joseph Kathenge and Kenyatta but they were all new men with no traditional power base. Nor can we clearly see the events as we see those of the Yoruba country. The whole movement must, therefore, be looked at from the wider context of the social-economic-political set-up in Kenya itself since the coming of white settlement, a set-up that discriminated against the African and placed him in a subordinate position.

The question of Kikuyu land which was taken away from the Kikuyu and given to Europeans for farming, runs across the whole theme. Its importance to the Kikuyu, and the disruption the alienation of their land caused, can only be explained in terms of the ferment it caused from Harry Thuku times through Mau Mau times to the present. The part that land alienation played in the movement for independence, and in the final break of 1929, becomes clear when it is examined in this context. Mau Mau die-hards who are still at large in the Aberdare Mountains have refused an offer of rehabilitation and re-settlement from Kenyatta's government, because they maintain that Kenya's freedom without the return of their land is not freedom. Oginga Odinga takes the same view, though within the context of the whole of Kenya. It is probably true that the movement was a claim by the Kikuyu to

political and agrarian ownership of their land. This claim was directed against the missions first, because they were easily identified with the Europeanization process; Christianity was certainly one of the three principal forces of this process,¹¹⁸ i.e. settlers, the colonial rule and Christianity. Professor Thomas Hodgkin would see it as an attempt to fight against the disintegrating forces of European influence¹¹⁹ in what Dr. Bengt Sundkler would describe as a society of racial discrimination directed against the Africans.¹²⁰ Thus, the church which the Africans were closely associated with became the first center of this rebellion because

within the closed circuit of the Church it is possible to develop the self-governing society that [it] is forbidden to construct outside.¹²¹

The Kikuyu independent movement of the twenties, in church and school, and the final break that came towards the end of the

¹¹⁸J. W. Arthur, "C.S.M. in Kikuyu," September 2, 1930 in Arthur Papers, University of Edinburgh.

¹¹⁹Thomas Hodgkin, Nationalism in Colonial Africa (London, 1956), Chapter III, passim.

¹²⁰For this see his study, Bantu Prophets in South Africa, 2nd ed. (London, 1961).

¹²¹Hodgkin, op. cit., p. 106.

decade is, therefore, part of the larger movement towards independence from an alien rule that was identifiable with the missions and with the settlers. Foreign rule, whether in the state or the church, meant higher taxation, loss of land, economic difficulties and the break-up of Kikuyu as a tribe. In this colonial situation which was dominated by Europeans, the Kikuyu saw no way out of the problems that alien rule and alien missions had created. The European-controlled church, insofar as the British Protestant missions can be so identified, offered no solution, but, instead, became a powerful arm of the colonial administration. Mission school education, whose control the missions had sought and obtained, did not seem to open any economic avenues to the African Christians. In fact, in the twenties, one might argue that the missions came to see themselves as manufacturers of a trained labour force. The C.S.M. wanted to turn the Kikuyu into Scotch Presbyterians, and the A.I.M. into American mid-western Christians, without offering them the corresponding economic, political and social channels and positions that went with this religion, in its European context.¹²² It was no wonder

¹²²Conversation with Bishop L. J. Beecher, C.M.S., February 26, 1966, Nairobi. Bishop Beecher believes that the C.S.M. and A.I.M. were too legalistic in their work on the highlands and therefore very punitive.

that the Kikuyu should strive to get control of mission education and to establish their own churches.

Central to the movement for independence in church and schools was, of course, the K.C.A. Unlike the Bataka Party of Buganda, founded in 1921, seven years after Mugema had formed his church in that country, the K.C.A. was inseparable from the movement towards independence in church and school. It is difficult to talk of independency in Kikuyu separate from K.C.A. Early association between the Young Kikuyu Association and Daudi Maina wa Kiragu has already been suggested. It was Maina wa Kiragu who led the independent movement in Fort Hall and laid claim to the schools in Kiambu and Nyeri in 1929. And, in particular, it was the K.C.A. that spearheaded the break with the missions in 1929.

More important and crucial to the movement is the leadership and the rank and file support it drew from the missions' followers. This is perhaps understandable the more so because it was in the missions that the Kikuyu got some rudimentary education. Their association with the missions made them the more discontented when they could not look to the missions for leadership or social justice. Then too, the opportunities for advancement in leadership in the missions were as closed as

they were in government service. Interesting also is the fact that all the leaders of the Young Kikuyu Association and the Kikuyu Central Association, Harry Thuku, Joseph Kathenge and Jomo Kenyatta, were rebels from their respective churches before they led the political associations. All three had been excommunicated from their missions, and this explains, in part, their early realization of the shortcomings of the missions.

The missions were unable to adjust to the new environment rather than the Africans to the missions. Is there, not, perhaps, the early manifestation of this staunch nationalism in Kenyatta when he refused to apprentice with the C.S.M. in 1923?¹²³

In 1929-1930, at any rate, the new men who had rebelled in 1922 and joined the Kikuyu nationalistic movement in 1925, took over power among Kikuyu in church, school and in politics. The District Commissioner, Kiambu, rightly commented that the movement was a conscious attempt to seize power from the chiefs and elders and to "ensure that the real power shall rest with a native political organization (K.C.A.) which will dictate

¹²³ Arthur to McLachlan, February 16, 1929, Arthur Papers, University of Edinburgh Archives.

the policy to such chiefs as are allowed to remain."¹²⁴

In the eyes of the young generation, a majority of whom had passed through the missions or were there, to seize power from the chiefs and elders was tantamount to doing so from the state and church. To the young generation of Kikuyu, chiefs and elders, like the missions, had increasingly come to be the agents of the colonial administration. J. W. C. Dougall witnessed the growing tension between the chiefs and the young progressive generation, in 1925, and he blamed the government for precipitating it. He remarked,

The Kikuyu country seems to be in a state of uneasiness. The trouble arises from the Government policy of driving a wedge between the younger more progressive men and their elders. Government appoints chiefs and headmen to act as agents of its policy. They [chiefs] close schools where they can. . . .¹²⁵

Traditionally, these chiefs and elders and their generation from which they came, should have retired from authority in 1925. This was the time, when in Kikuyu society, the older generation should have passed on power to the generation below it. In 1925, it was the end of their twenty years of political and ritual rule,

¹²⁴District Commissioner, Kiambu, to Provincial Commissioner, Nyeri, December 24, 1929, PC/DC Adm. 15/3/3, Nairobi Archives.

¹²⁵J. W. C. Dougall to Oldham, November 17, 1925, Correspondence of J. H. Oldham, I. M. C. Archives, London.

the normal period during which there was transference of this power to the younger generation just coming in. The new generation would have had to pass it over to the next generation after twenty years. The Colonial Administration did not have any place for this system and so the young generation did not come into power. It was no wonder that the hostility against chiefs and elders that began in 1922 became more and more sharp after 1925. In Kikuyu eyes, and as far as the missions were concerned, the young generation had won their battle in 1929.

E PILOGUE

Jomo Kenyatta is a typical representative of the young Kikuyu progressive generation of the twenties. Educated at C.M.S. school, Kikuyu, from which he rebelled, he emerged to be the central figure in the movement for Kenya's independence under African leadership. In 1963 came the crowning success of his long battle on behalf of the people of Kenya when the colony became independent with Jomo Kenyatta as its first Prime Minister. In the following year, Kenya became a republic with Kenyatta as President.

In 1928, he became the General Secretary of K. C. A.¹ and was the editor of the K. C. A. 's powerful and popular local paper, Muigwithania.² Kenyatta was in England for a brief period between 1929 and 1930 to petition the Colonial Secretary about Kikuyu grievances. Well might he have rejoiced at the popularity of K. C. A., among the Kikuyu, a popularity that

¹J. W. Arthur to McLachlan, February 16, 1929, in J. W. Arthur Papers, University of Edinburgh Library Archives, Edinburgh.

²Vincent Harlow, E. M. Chilver and Alison Smith, History of East Africa, Vol. II (Oxford, 1965), p. 362.

had been brought about by the controversy with the missions. On his brief return to Kenya, he found that even chiefs were giving encouragement to the collection of funds for K.C.A. The District Commissioner, Fort Hall, had reported that some of them were directly involved and singled out Njuguna, Muchiri, Kanukie and Ndamaiyu.³

Kenyatta, with Peter Mbiyo Koinange, returned to England in 1931 to represent K.C.A. at the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Closer Union of the East Africa Territories. Their representation was turned down in the typical fashion of the Colonial Administration, on the ground that K.C.A. was not representative of African opinion in Kenya. Africans from Tanganyika and Uganda, as well as those who were chosen by the Government of Kenya, gave evidence against federation because, they rightly maintained, it would establish Kenya's white settler domination in East Africa forever. Koinange returned to Kenya to take over Githunguri Teachers' College, as principal.⁴ Kenyatta remained in England for fifteen years

³District Commissioner, Fort Hall, to Provincial Commissioner, Nyeri, January 2, 1930 & January 22, 1930, PC/DC Adm. 15/3/3, Kenya National Archives, Nairobi.

⁴F. B. Welbourn, East African Rebels, A Study of Some Independent Churches (London, 1961), p. 154.

and returned to Kenya in 1946, after the Second World War, a year ahead of the return of Kwame Nkrumah to the Gold Coast, now Ghana. On his return, Kenyatta took control of the independent schools, forcing K.I.S.A. and Karing'a to merge in 1947; K.I.S.A. had to accept the militancy of Karing'a, and its final end came when its leaders were squeezed out in 1950.⁵ There was thus only one provincial independent school organization from about 1947, and it was under Kenyatta. His control of the independent schools became complete when he replaced Peter Mbiyo Koinange as principal of Githunguri Teachers' Training College, in the same year. At the same time Kenyatta was elected President of Kenya National Union. K.A.U. was formed in 1945, K.C.A. having been banned in 1941 because of subversive activities.⁶ Thus one year after his return, Kenyatta had obtained control of the different machines that were now necessary for the forging of the war for the independence of Kenya under African leadership. He was now in agreement with Kwame Nkrumah, leader of the Convention People's Party in Ghana, that he must seek first the political kingdom and then everything shall be added thereunto. It was now clear that both the independent schools and Githunguri College would become

⁵Ibid., pp. 155-156.

⁶George Bennett, Kenya, A Political History: The Colonial Period (London, 1963), p. 113.

the training ground for the fight for Kenya's independence. To prepare the young Kenyans that were enrolled in his schools for uhuru, it was necessary to give them training for that goal. To

what extent church services were used to administer the Mau Mau oath has yet to be studied. What is clear is that preparation for attainment of uhuru was provided in both the schools and the churches, training grounds which were necessary for the winning of uhuru.

From 1947 until he was arrested in 1952, Kenyatta travelled up and down the highlands, addressing mass rallies in every reserve. The first signs of Mau Mau began to appear in 1948, and the movement became openly violent the following year when its members perpetrated murders on Europeans and Africans in isolated areas. Chiefs who were collaborating with the government were singled out and became the first victims of the Mau Mau rebellion. By 1952, the highlands were in a state of ferment, if not in rebellion; law and order had broken down, and murders perpetrated by Kikuyu on Europeans and Kikuyu collaborators, often referred to as loyalists, became more common. A state of emergency was declared the same year, and Kenyatta and the leaders of K. A. U. were arrested. Mau Mau "freedom fighters," their common name in independent Kenya, had, of course, organ-

ized an army and had taken to the Aberdare mountains. Then followed the long trial of Kenyatta, in which he was sentenced to seven years imprisonment for organizing the Mau Mau. He was subsequently released, in 1960, but confined in Lodwar, Northern Province, where he had been transferred in 1959.

Lodwar is a dry, dusty place in contrast to the fertile, lush cool Kikuyu country. In 1962 Kenyatta was released to become the President of Kenya African National Union, and the first Prime Minister of independent Kenya in 1963.

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Province of East Africa--in process of formation 1927-1960, Vols. I-IV.

Highland Missionary Committee--Correspondence 1931-1952, Minutes (typed) 1922-1940.

Circumcision.

Alliance School, 1926-1940.

- b. Packets marked: Letters to 1913.

Diocesan Records 1880, 1911, Bishop Peel, etc.

- c. Diary of Mary Bassett 1892-1895 (in personal keeping of Mrs. J. L. Beecher, Nairobi). (Mary Bassett married Harry Leakey in 1899 and Mrs. J. L. Beecher is their daughter.)

- d. Personal letters of Canon H. Leakey, 1909-1923, also in the personal keeping of Mrs. Beecher.

- e. The Archbishop's library has invaluable source materials which are not classified.

Note on the Archbishop's Archives: The Archbishop has now refused permission for the use of the Archives due to lack of proper room and the shortage of staff. The author was allowed the use of the Archives and the dining room of the Archbishop's house was made available for research for several months in 1966. The University College, Nairobi, is negotiating for the transfer of the documents to the College.

The Bishop of Mombasa Archives, Mombasa, Kenya.

Almost all the documents have been transferred to London, Salisbury Square or the Archives of the Archbishop, Nairobi. Some unclassified material remains.

Regional Secretary of East Africa (C.M.S.) Nairobi.

Unclassified material exists here. Of particular interest are the Minute Books and Log Books of C.M.S. Mission Stations, Mombasa Diocese. These will soon be transferred to the Archives of the Archbishop, Nairobi.

Church of Scotland Mission Kikuyu Archives.

All have been transferred to Edinburgh University Archives or the National Library of Scotland.

2. Missionary Sources in the United Kingdom.

Church Missionary Society Archives, Salisbury Square (C.M.S.), East Equatorial Africa Mission:

Incoming papers from the East Equatorial Mission, 1844-1873, classified under C A5/MI-, 1874-1915 classified under G3 A5/0.

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MS 7606-17: a) Letters from Missionaries (East and
Central Africa) MS 7606-8; b) General Letters MS 7612-
17, MS 7625.

- b. The University of Edinburgh Library Archives:

J. S. Arthur Papers in packets marked: Kikuyu Land Question 1901-1937; Native Labour Question, 1901-1925; Kikuyu Missions Volunteer Corps, 1917-1918; Miscellaneous Subjects, 1901-1933; Missions general.

G. A. Grieve Papers--two files mainly on Alliance High School of which he became the first principal in 1926.

- c. International Missionary Council Archives (Correspondence of J. H. D. Oldham.)

Documents are preserved in packets marked: Africa--General; East Africa--Kenya relevant files marked "Currency changes," "Native Unrest," "Political Situation," "Land," "Native Labour," "Indians--Protest (1921-23)," "Education," "Correspondence (J. W. Arthur H. D. Hooper, etc., 1920-1930)."

- d. The Methodist Missionary Society, Marylebone Road
(United Methodist Free Church).

Only three minutes books of the Foreign Missionary Committee have survived. All attempts to trace both outgoing letters to the Kenya Mission and the incoming letters from the Kenya Mission at the time of my visit to England or before have produced no results.

The three large minute books are classified under: Foreign Missionary Committee Minute Book I (1862-1907); Unnumbered Minute Book (1908-1923); Minute Book II (1924-1940).

3. Government Sources in Kenya

- a. National Archives, Jogoo House, Nairobi.

All the Kenya Government records are now held at the Central Archives in Nairobi in the basement of Jogoo House. By early 1965 almost all the records from all the provincial and district headquarters of Kenya were at Nairobi. By 1966 most of the records were already classified and the Archives were open for research. The records to 1945 are open but the Archivist with the approval of the Permanent Secretary, Office of the Vice President, can grant special permission for use of documents through 1960. Except for the Secretariat records for the East African Protectorate Administration which were destroyed by fire in 1939, the Archives are very complete and they are the main source of historical research in Kenya.

- b. Provincial Archives, Mombasa.

The author was at Mombasa from May through June, 1966 and part of September, 1966. Most of the records had been transferred to Nairobi and those still at Mombasa were in the process of being transferred to Nairobi. The Provincial Archives, however, hold a few useful records which are open to researchers upon permission from the headquarters at Nairobi. Before the end of 1966 these records were open to members of the University of East Africa without prior permission from Nairobi but the Kenya government has now adopted strong regulations for the use of government documents.

4. Government Sources in the United Kingdom, Public Records Office, London.

a. Foreign Office Records.

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b. Colonial Office Records.

Series C.O. 533. Correspondence relating to East Africa Protectorate/Kenya from 1905.

II - Interviews

Most of the interviews were taken at random as and when the occasion arose during my research about Kikuyu and Mombasa. Recorded interviews were, however, conducted with the following persons:

Kenya: M. P. Koinange, Fred Kubai, John Kanina, Naftali Semler, Paulo Mbotela, descendant of freed slaves, Mrs. A. Mumwanyi (descendant of freed slaves), Naftali John Simuli (descendant of freed slaves), Immanuel Musula (headmaster of Freretown Primary School), Nancy Mwenja (communicated interview with twelve Kikuyu women who chose to remain anonymous), Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Beecher, Solomon Joshua, Petro I. Marealle, Joseph Mawalla, and Petro Merinyo.

United Kingdom: Mrs. J. W. Arthur, Miss Eleanor Badger, Archdeacon P. G. Bostock.

III - Printed Material

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 Kikuyu are in Arthur Papers.

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 Native Affairs Department 1925-
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 E. P. C. Girouard, "Memorandum for Provincial and District
 Commissioners," (1910).
 Report of Education Commission of the East Africa Protectorate
 (1919).
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 lating to Native Labour and papers connected therewith. Cmd.
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